# Chronicles

May 2005 A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE $3.95


# Peace in the Promised Land

*"The letters of history are fake unless they are written in blood."*


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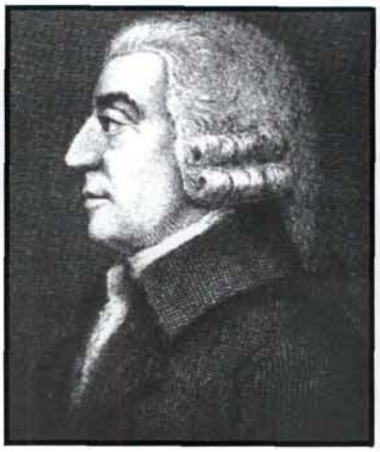

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*for*

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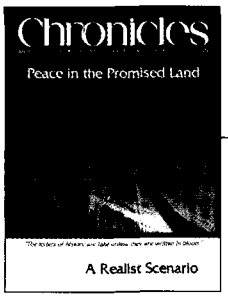


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# POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

## On Hitler and Stalin

Josef Schüsslburner's "The Yoke of Democracy" (*Correspondence*, March) makes valid comparisons between the brutal Stalin and Hitler regimes. His explanation of the relative lack of prominence in Germany of the 60th anniversary of the July 20, 1944, assassination attempt against Hitler is interesting within the context of this comparison.

Why was Stalin more successful than Hitler in eliminating threats to his regime? In Russia, Lenin's Bolsheviks succeeded in grasping power and eventually eradicated the whole Russian imperial army, replacing it with a new military force that we used to call the Red Army.

Such did not happen in Germany. There, the so-called Spartacus rebellion of 1919, led by the communist Karl Liebknecht and the charismatic Rosa Luxemburg, was crushed mainly by decommissioned German imperial officers. (My father, a young lieutenant after the 1918 defeat, participated.) The communist revolution, which had been so successful in Russia, failed in Germany. The old imperial German army reemerged, as a part of Hitler's army. Eventually, some became disenchanted with the Nazi government and tried to eliminate this regime (though others remained loyal to Hitler). Had the assassination plot against Hitler been successful, there might have been a more honorable peace, instead of unconditional surrender to the Allies.

—*Charles W. Arnade*
*University of South Florida, Tampa*

## On American Heroes

In "A Hero Among Heroes" (*Sins of Omission*, March), Roger McGrath wrote, "Ever since the late 1960's, the cultural Marxists of academe have worked assiduously to destroy American heroes." I surely agree with him; however, he uses the term *cultural Marxist*, which sounds to me like an oxymoron, since Marxists have no culture in the traditional sense of the term. They tear down and destroy all that has gone before them, replacing it with nothing.

The culture that remains in the United States is in the Southern states, where some real element of cultural conservation has survived, though it is fading at the same rate as that of Southerners who find higher-paying jobs in the West or North.

American socialists reject and demonize the past while they spend its capital and prosper on the success that past views and policies of liberty have brought them. It does not occur to the United States—or to the world, for that matter—that the catastrophic violence and massive financial and social failure of socialism have anything to do with socialism and its "invincible arrogance," as Michael McMahon described it so well in his article "The Abolition of Learning" (*Views*).

The South, like a "Stonewall," still honors Washington, Jefferson, Henry, Randolph, Calhoun, Davis, Lee, and Jackson, while American socialists scrounge for heroes among the world's failed socialists "leaders," some of whom led the United States into the great wars—men such as Lincoln, Wilson, Roosevelt, Truman, and Kennedy.

The truth is that free people mind their own business and establish those permanent things that create order and sustain liberty—faith, family, tradition, community, private property, loyalty, courage, and honor. Without the permanent things, a nation becomes just another bankrupt and crumbling empire.

When democratically determined values have fully replaced religious morals, a society is finished, and new civilizations will replace it, over the bones and ashes of its true heroes.

I always look forward to reading your excellent magazine each month.

—*Timothy D. Manning, Sr.*
*Kernersville, NC*

I have a highly technical quibble with one item in Roger McGrath's "A Hero Among Heroes." He refers to Audie Murphy firing a ".50 caliber" machine gun from a German tank destroyer. Neither German tanks nor German tank destroyers carried .50-caliber machine guns. Those that had machine guns (and not all types did) used the 7.9 mm gun. That is (approximately) .30 caliber.

—*Henry E. Heatherly*
*Lafayette, LA*



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# For the Peace of Jerusalem

This issue, and the book that will follow in a few months, are the fruits of three years' work for the study group that The Rockford Institute put together at the request of our board chairman, David A. Hartman. During this period, we were asked many times: Why? Not because peace in the Middle East is not important, but because the Institute has never been active in Middle Eastern affairs. Of our group, only Leon Hadar is a *bona fide* expert on the Middle East. The rest have expertise in tangential areas of ancient and modern history and current political studies. Considering the wide range of think tanks, study groups, academic departments, scholarly journals, and popular newsletters that have addressed this subject, what did we hope to bring to the issue?

The simple answer is perspective. We do not have any regional or religious axes to grind. Our group includes Jews and Christians of Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant backgrounds. We invited several Islamic experts to contribute papers; two accepted, but we have not received either of their papers. Although we have one British historian in our midst and one Israeli-American, our primary orientation is as American conservatives whose overriding concern, to borrow a phrase from Dr. Srdja Trifkovic, is the American interest.

These days, the dominant model for policymaking in Washington is imperial. Neoconservative strategists speak openly of pursuing global hegemony and of fomenting democratic revolution around the globe. If the security and interests of the American people are mentioned, it is only to pay lip service to them. Many pundits simply ignore the American interest and speak as if our special relationship with Israel is all that matters, while others are so concerned with the sufferings of the Palestinians that they have no sympathy for what the Israelis have suffered. To both sides, we would cite the wise words of George Washington:

> Observe good faith and justice toward all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct. And can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and at no distant period a great nation to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. . . .
>
> In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded, and that in place of them just and amicable feelings toward all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges toward another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. . . .
>
> So, likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to retaliate in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld; and it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation) facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country without odium, sometimes even with popularity, gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation. . . .
>
> Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government . . .

Washington concludes his admonition with a chilling prophecy that has been fulfilled in our own day:

> Real patriots who may resist the intrigues of the favorite are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people to surrender their interests.

We wish nothing but good to the peoples of Israel and Palestine. As conservatives who believe in justice and fairness, we should advocate and support policies that promise hope of bringing a just and peaceful resolution of the conflict, but our primary concern is with the security and interests of the American people. Without passing judgment on any specific policy or action taken by either Democratic or Republican administrations, we do think it is time for Americans to reevaluate a Middle Eastern policy that seems to breed hostility and terrorism against Americans and our allies, a one-sided policy of support for Likud extremism that, in the belief of a great many Israelis, seriously threatens the security and even survival of Israel.

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THE NEOCONSERVATIVE ideology of Western (preferably American) democracy and free markets is a form of secular religion. The door to this secular church begins to open to the sinner when he starts surfing the internet, watching CNN, eating at McDonald's, and reading the gospel according to Tom Friedman. And he ("or she"—adding that is itself a sign that you've been born again) becomes a full member of the new religion when he commits himself without reservation to the principles of Pax Americana, globalization, and multiculturalism.

Indeed, if you regard neoconservatives as missionary zealots applying U.S. power to remake the world and establish a heaven on Earth, then the recent and colorful "democratic revolutions" in Georgia ("Rose"), Ukraine ("Orange"), Iraq ("Purple"), or Lebanon ("Cedar") should be considered as forms of mass conversion or baptism. Trendy young men and women—T-shirts displaying cool logos, thongs showing off from behind, men wearing earrings, the sound of rap music is in the air—are evidence that the country in question is ready to join the American Empire. If you even dare to raise doubts about the commitment of these guys and dolls to the new religion and challenge the belief that your tax money should pay for all of that (not to mention the blood of American men and, yes, women), you are dubbed a heretic ("isolationist").

After Assad, Jr., took control of the Syrian dictatorships, Friedman (or was it the Gospel according to David Ignatius) had a vision of Dr. Assad the Optometrist seeing the light and becoming a pro-American democrat. There was also the religious awakening tale, this time from U.S.-occupied Iraq, about the eldest grandson of the Ayatollah ("Death to America") Khomeini, who revealed to American reporters that he was reading Madison and Jefferson and discovering that "America is the symbol of freedom," and that "religion has got to be separated from regimes, such as it is in America."

And now there is the strange case of that rabid antisemite and racist, Lebanese-Druze warlord Walid Jumballat, who has just been deputized by Washington and the U.S. media as a leader of the "Cedar Revolution." Just two years ago, Jumballat told Lebanon's *Daily Star* that the true axis of evil was one of "oil and Jews . . . The oil axis is present in most of the U.S. administration, beginning with its president, vice-president, and top advisers, including [Condoleezza] Rice, who is oil-colored, while the axis of Jews is present with Paul Wolfowitz." But Jumballat, who had accused Israel of being responsible for the September 11 attacks, has finally found religion, confessing to the *Washington Post* a few weeks ago that he is now a different man: "It's strange for me to say it, but this process of change has started because of the American invasion of Iraq. I was cynical about Iraq. But when I saw the Iraqi people voting three weeks ago, eight million of them, it was the start of a new Arab world. The Syrian people, the Egyptian people, all say that something is changing. The Berlin Wall has fallen. We can see it."

Yeah, right—we can see it. The Druze gang leader, whose hands are dripping with blood, who has been in the political bed with almost every Middle Eastern thug, would be transformed into Saint Walid. In return, he would now become a recipient of National Endowment for Democracy dollars and other goodies. And, if Iranian spy and crook Ahmed Chalabi got the Americans to fight on his behalf in Iraq, who knows? U.S. soldiers could soon be assisting the "Cedarists" by bombing the Syrians (who, after all, murdered Jumballat's father). In any case, our new ally Walid would probably soon be shaking hand with George W. Bush at the White House and would certainly be invited to the religious ceremony that demonstrates that *you have become, indeed, one of us*: the annual meeting of the West's most powerful and mighty—Tom Friedman is always there!—at the Swiss resort town of Davos.

President Bush seems to have implied recently that it is in Davos where, soon, we could get to see Sheik Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, the leader of Lebanon's Hezbollah, the Shiite group allied with Syria and Iran that has been behind the killings of quite a few Americans and Israelis. In the aftermath of several anti-Syrian "Cedar" demonstrations in Beirut that were supposed to prove to the world—or at least to CNN—that the Lebanese were about to jump aboard the pro-American "democracy" train, Fadlallah gathered hundreds of thousands of his followers—no thongs, men wearing earrings, or rap music in that event—to demonstrate that the Shiites, who constitute about 40 percent of the population, were not going to be baptized neocon-style anytime soon. So President Bush is hoping that a promised future of U.S. dollars, invitations to the White House, and a ticket to Davos will help change Fadlallah's mind and turn him into a Bush-fearing, user-friendly, democracy-loving sheik. "We view Hezbollah as a terrorist organization," Bush said after an Oval Office meeting with Jordan's King Abdullah. But then, he added: "I would hope that Hezbollah would prove that they are not by laying down their arms and not threatening peace."

What Bush and his neocon fanatics don't understand is that no one is being converted these days to Western-style liberalism on the road to and from Damascus, Beirut, Riyadh, Cairo—or, for that matter, Kirkuk and Baghdad. In fact, whether it's Fadlallah, Jumballat, Jaafari, or Talabani, what really counts for the cast of characters that matters in the Middle East are tribalism, ethnicity, and, yes, religion, and not Western concepts of individual rights.

Hence, in Lebanon, a coalition of crooked politicians and brutal warlords and gangsters representing some elements in the weakened Maronite, Sunni, and Druze communities are hoping to counter the emerging political and demographic Shiite represented by Hezbollah. And they are trying to draw in the Americans to do the dirty job for them. Ironically, the Americans have just helped the Kurds and the Shiites, some of whom are affiliated with radical Islamic militias that are modeled after Hezbollah, to come to power in Iraq and to devastate the power of the Sunnis there.

The notion that Americans are now helping ignite a Shiite religious and political revival in the Middle East, from the Levant to the Persian Gulf, doesn't make a lot of sense—unless, that is, you subscribe to the Gospel according to Saint Paul (Wolfowitz, that is). The neocons insist that they are making the Middle East safe for democracy, while they are really making it safe for ethnic and religious identity. But who can argue with a believer?

*—Leon T. Hadar*



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PAUL WOLFOWITZ's nomination by President George W. Bush as the new president of the World Bank has caused a storm of protests from abroad, but the news is good. At his new post, Wolfowitz will not be able to do nearly as much damage as he has done at the Pentagon.

That damage has been considerable. Over the past four years, he has been the most influential proponent of neoconservatism both as an outlook and as a geopolitical project, within the Bush administration. The *Weltanschauung* is Shtetl-paranoid, Christophobic, and Straussian. The project is mastery of the world, a "benevolent global hegemony" that is as certain to end in ruin as it is likely to destroy the remaining vestiges of the American Republic.

Wolfowitz's intellectual maturation, when he was a doctoral student at the University of Chicago in the late 1960's, proceeded under the tutelage of the late RAND guru Albert Wohlstetter, famous for his view that nuclear deterrence was not enough—the United States had to plan to fight a nuclear war in order to deter it. Richard Perle was another promising protégé of Wohlstetter. He and Wolfowitz got to know each other through their aging mentor and became lifelong political and personal associates.

Perle was the first to go to Washington, in 1969, when Wohlstetter secured his appointment as executive director of the Committee to Maintain a Prudent Defense Policy, founded primarily to defeat Nixon's arms-control negotiations with Moscow. Three years later, Perle was active—together with Midge Decter, Norman Podhoretz, and Irving Kristol—in the establishment of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority to promote Sen. Henry ("Scoop") Jackson's bid for the presidency. At that time, they were all "Democrats"; when they revamped the Committee on the Present Danger in 1976, they were "Republicans, Democrats, and Independents." When exactly the same crew created the Committee for the Free World in 1981, Reagan was in the White House, and Perle & Co. had become "conservatives."

By the time that Wolfowitz had left a teaching position at Yale and moved to Washington, he could rely on a well-developed support network. His first appointment was to the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and Wohlstetter's two prodigies soon became a strong tandem clamoring for confrontation with Moscow. From there, Wolfowitz went to the Pentagon as deputy assistant secretary of defense for regional programs, then to the State Department's Policy Planning Office, and spent three-and-a-half years as assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs before being sent to Indonesia as the U.S. ambassador. He returned from Jakarta to serve under President George H.W. Bush as under secretary for policy at the Pentagon (the post currently held by his friend and protégé Douglas Feith).

Wolfowitz's rise to national prominence came at that post in early 1992, when he authored a secret 46-page Pentagon memorandum that was leaked to the *New York Times*. The Cold War was over, the Soviet Union had disintegrated, but Wolfowitz was not satisfied. America had to keep arming herself in order to ensure that no rival power would emerge anywhere. She had to convince "potential competitors that they need not aspire to a greater role," and she should promote "the sense that the world order is ultimately backed by the U.S."

In assessing future threats, Wolfowitz stressed the alleged danger of Moscow's attempt to reincorporate the newly independent western republics of the Soviet Union. He advocated an all-out, U.S.-led NATO war against Russia, especially if Moscow threatened the security of the Baltic republics. Wolfowitz boldly asserted that Russia would be unlikely to respond with nuclear weapons, even though he offered no clear basis for that assessment.

That America should fight an all-out war and risk nuclear annihilation in order to maintain the independence of former Soviet republics was utterly insane, but, instead of being taken to a safe, quiet place where he could do no harm to himself or to others, Wolfowitz became a neocon hero and embarked on a decade of activism that, in 2001, brought him to the Pentagon as Donald Rumsfeld's No. 2. He enthusiastically supported Clinton's pro-Muslim interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990's for the same reason.

These underlying loyalties help explain the single-minded vigor with which Wolfowitz and Perle advocated the war on Iraq for years before they got it. They were founding members of the Project for a New American Century (PNAC), established on principles that included "American global leadership." PNAC began urging the overthrow of Saddam Hussein almost immediately. Its January 26, 1998, open letter to President Clinton demanding war against Iraq is said to have been drafted by Wolfowitz. Testifying to the House National Security Committee eight months later, he declared that Saddam Hussein was reconstituting his weapons capabilities and suggested "a serious policy in Iraq" that would "free Iraq's neighbors from Saddam's murderous threats." This theme would be a mainstay of Wolfowitz's public-speaking and private-policy advocacy for years to come.

Just nine days after the September 11 attacks, PNAC sent another letter, this time to President George W. Bush, stating: "But even if evidence does not link Iraq directly to the attack, any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq." As he was a government official, Wolfowitz could not sign the letter, but, according to the final report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, he was doing his bit for the cause, trying to insert the war against Iraq into the package of antiterrorist options. Secretary of State Colin Powell told the commission that, within days of September 11, Wolfowitz had argued that Iraq should be attacked but offered no rational basis for the demand: "Powell said that Wolfowitz was not able to justify his belief that Iraq was behind 9/11. 'Paul [Wolfowitz] was always of the view that Iraq was a problem that had to be dealt with,' Powell told us. 'And he saw this as one way of using this event as a way to deal with the Iraq problem.'"

*Using* is an apt word: In the end, the commission concluded that there was "no credible evidence" of a terrorist link. Its findings were openly supported by CIA and FBI officials who had been under intense political pressure before the war (notably by Douglas Feith's "Office of Special Plans" at the Pentagon) to establish such a link.

Once the war was over and the lie became evident, Wolfowitz calmly changed his tune and took to calling the WMD's a "secondary issue." ("I'm not concerned about weapons of mass destruction, I'm concerned about getting Iraq on its feet.") Then came his now-famous admission (*Vanity Fair*, July 2003) that, for bureaucratic reasons, "we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction, because it was the one reason everyone could agree on." His chutzpah reached a new height



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when he told the Armed Services Committee in April 2004 that the war in Iraq was fought to remove a "brutal dictator"—and failed to mention any "weapons of mass destruction."

Wolfowitz's behavior is coherent only if his objective is to make sure that the United States—redefined and controlled by him and people like him—remains the only power that matters, in the Middle East and everywhere else. This mindset is the greatest domestic threat to the constitutional order, identity, and security of the United States. Wolfowitz has devoted his life to the pursuit of Power for its own sake and for the sake of interests that are not American. The end of his morbid quest, if allowed to unfurl, will be similar to that which we witnessed in Berlin in November 1989 and in May 1945.

—*Srdja Trifkovic*

**GEORGE FROST KENNAN, R.I.P.** George Frost Kennan died on March 17 in his home—one year and one month and one day after his 100th birthday. I am now 81 years old. He was the greatest American I have known.

He was (and remains) A Triumph of Character. His obituaries recorded his many achievements adequately, often with the praise that was his due. There was a sense of respectful distance in some of them, a sense that George Kennan was part of a now irretrievable past. That is not untrue, and, yet, he was A Man of All Seasons or, putting it differently, A Party of One—a man of principles rather than of ideas. An idea, someone once wrote, is like a fixed cannon: It can only fire in one direction. Whereas a principle is like a cannon fixed on a revolving platform: It can strike error in any direction.

That was why secretaries of state and other diplomats so often felt uneasy with this splendid American exemplar of the once Foreign Service; that was why so many academic historians did not wholly comprehend the unique qualities of his history books; that is why his philosophy was often misunderstood or, rather, mistakenly categorized. Never mind—his writings will live, as long as there are men and women who read them. The breadth of his knowledge and the mastery of his style are sufficient for that kind of intellectual appreciation. But then, those qualities were inseparable from his person.

Here was this middle-class young man, with his family anchored in the Midwest, who lost his mother in his early childhood, a good enough student to be entered in the Princeton of the 1920's where he was something of a loner, not rich but studious, accepted then by a Foreign Service that was admirably lean in those times, recognized by his superiors, directed and posted to places where he would perfect his Russian studies, including Berlin, where he met and married his beautiful and inimitable wife, now his widow, after 74 years of an inspiring marriage. Among other Foreign Service officials of his rank, he was *primus inter pares*, though he did not share the Wilsonian and internationalist public philosophy of the 30's and 40's; but, besides his official duties, he had no power or influence save for his pen. He was largely right about Europe in the 30's; he was very right about the Soviet Union in the 40's, but it took time, probably too much time, for his voice to be heard in Washington, in 1946 and in 1947. He knew that and regretted it; in one of the telling passages in the incomparable first volume of his *Memories* (to me, the finest autobiography written by an American, far superior to Henry Adams'), he wrote, well, that's how things and people are: They open their eyes and ears only when they are, finally, willing to do so and then momentarily indeed. That is why he, unlike almost everyone else, discounted the value of his now-famous Long Telegram of 1946 and of his Containment article in 1947. They included Ideas Whose Time Had Come; and he knew that ideas whose time has come—that is, ideas that are popular—ought to be treated with skeptical caution.

Here rises the example of George Kennan's character. At that time, and thereafter, when the ideology of anticommunism turned into a substitution of American patriotism, this early and principled anticommunist had not the least inclination to purse, let alone profit from, his reputation; to the contrary, he saw long-lasting and great danger in that devolution—indeed, in much of the entire governmental philosophy of the Cold War. Thus, his counsels were cast aside by such different secretaries of state as Dean Acheson and John Foster Dulles. Thereafter, Kennan chose to live in Princeton where, for the next 50 years—the second half of his long life—he wrote his books and articles and public addresses, many of them grave and somber warnings against the ideologization and militarization of the ever-more-swollen American state. He had changed his mind, so many people said; and how ignorant they were, and still are, unwilling and unable to see the sterling consistency of his character and of his principles.

How fortunate was this once country, from whose midst such a fine mind and such a great character could arise! How ignorant and wasteful were (and are) the people who ignored or misunderstood him! Perhaps he was not meant to be a protagonist of his times; but let me say what another American said at the funeral of another American 140 years ago: *Now he belongs to the ages.*

—*John Lukacs*

**POPE JOHN PAUL II, R.I.P.** By any standard, the life of Pope John Paul II was extraordinary. Born in a small town in a country that had been the plaything of dynasts for centuries before his birth, and which became the target of history's bloodiest tyrants during his adult years, Karol Wojtyla became the first non-Italian pope in nearly five centuries and the first Slav ever to occupy the Chair of Peter. Blessed with a remarkable intellect, a facility for languages, great charm and charisma, and a steely resolve, he used his gifts to the fullest, in a life spent defending Christian Truth against the various ideologies that would, as he told hundreds of thousands of Poles gathered in Warsaw's Victory Square in 1979, "exclude Christ from history."

In many ways, the most dramatic days of this long pontificate came early, just eight months after Cardinal Wojtyla became pope, when he returned to his homeland for nine days. To adapt a title from a book devoted to the ideology John Paul II helped to vanquish, these were nine days that shook the world. Up to one third of all Poles saw John Paul II in person on that trip, and they came to believe that they were not alone. And once they realized that, communism's days were numbered, both in Poland and throughout Eastern Europe. The communists knew how formidable their enemy was: The week before the Holy Father's death, the Italian paper *Corriere della Sera* uncovered documents in East German archives proving that the 1981 attempt on John Paul's life was orchestrated by the KGB.

John Paul II knew that communism was not the only ideology that would keep Christ out of history: The materialism and secularism of the West were a threat to Christian morality. As he told Poles



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hoping to join the European Union in 1991, "Giving in to desire, to sex, to consumption: that is the Europeanism that some supporters of our entry into Europe think we should accept. . . . What is their criterion? Freedom. But which freedom? The freedom to take the life of an unborn child? Brothers and sisters, I protest against this concept of Europe held by the West." Nor was the Pope swayed by the popularity of Western materialism. As he told the Italian parliament in 2002, "if there is no ultimate truth to guide and orientate political action, then a democracy without values can easily become open or thinly disguised totalitarianism."

The Pope's preaching against soulless materialism and freedom divorced from truth did not cease after his rich baritone had become, at times, a barely audible mumble. The many in the West who place a merely utilitarian value on human life were clearly discomfited by the sight of a Pope hobbled by Parkinson's disease and arthritis. But John Paul taught, by word and example, that human life has intrinsic worth and that suffering is an inextricable part of the human condition. As the Pope understood, the only way to eliminate suffering from human life is to eliminate humans who are suffering.

It is doubtful that many of the millions of ordinary people around the world who are mourning John Paul II have ever read one of his encyclicals or apostolic letters, or even heard the entirety of one of his sermons. What attracted them to him was his transparent sincerity and goodness, his obviously deep faith, and the powerful example of a life lived in service to something other than self. In myriad ways—from kissing the ground on first visiting any country, to forgiving his would-be assassin, to embracing all manner of people in countless public appearances—John Paul II effectively communicated to millions the love that Saint Paul upholds as the highest virtue. This Pope was, in effect, parish priest to the world.

To be sure, many of us can think of things we might have done differently. And there is no doubt that John Paul II did not accomplish all that he set out to do, either within the Church or without. But against the panoply of his remarkable life, those critics taking to the airwaves after his death either to attack him or to promote their pet schemes to improve the Catholic Church came across as cranks and obsessives, as pygmies trying vainly to bring down a giant.

—*Tom Piatak*

**OBITER DICTA:** This special issue of *Chronicles* was guest-edited by our foreign-affairs editor, **Srdja Trifkovic**, director of The Rockford Institute's Center for International Affairs.

This month, our poet is **Andrew Huntley**, who hails from Sydney, Australia. Mr. Huntley's work has recently appeared in *AD2000*, *Adelaide Review*, *Christian Border*, and *Quadrant*. Collections of his work include *The Stone Serpent Dreaming* (Hale & Iremonger) and *Minor Pageant* (Island Press).

Our cover art is provided by editorial photographer **James Lukoski** of Brooklyn, New York, a native of Green Lake, Wisconsin. A specialist in photojournalistic coverage of the Middle East, Mr. Lukoski's work has appeared in the *New York Times Magazine*, *People*, *Life*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, the London *Times*, and the *Telegraph*, among others.

Our interior art is provided by our designer, **Melanie Anderson**. Mrs. Anderson received her B.F.A. from Northern Illinois University.

Additional interior art is provided by **Elizabeth Wolf** of Chicago. Miss Wolf received her B.F.A. from the School of Art at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.


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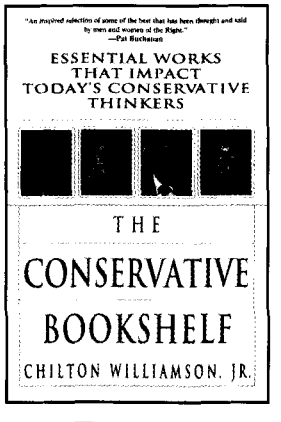


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*by Thomas Fleming*

# Peace in the Land of Sojourn

When Ariel Sharon, facing strong international pressure, proposed a withdrawal of settlements from Gaza, the settlers' response was predictably hostile. For some, the motive is predominantly economic—the settlements represent affordable housing; for others, nationalist politics is the driving force: Israel, they say, is Israel, and no part should be subtracted.

These arguments can be countered by political and economic arguments, and compensation can be provided to the displaced settlers, but one argument cannot be dealt with by either reason or money, and that is the argument of divine will: God gave the land to Israel, and what God has given, no mere man can take away. For example, in the spring of 2004, with the May 2 Likud referendum on the retreat plan looming on the horizon, residents of Gaza's Katif Block released a short video to show that the plan betrayed the settlers who risked their lives to live in the strip. The video featured the intransigent settlers singing: "Fear them not, for the Lord thy God He is with thee."

Opposing the settlers is an array of Arab nationalist and Islamic militants, especially members of Hamas, which is headquartered in Gaza. Hamas wears many faces, and, in the United States, it has raised money for helping Palestinian children, but the Hamas Charter, written in 1988, does not conceal that its goal is to "raise the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine."

On the radical end, then, the war is between rival gods who make rival promises. Some American evangelicals have weighed in on the side of Israel. TV mogul Pat Robertson has led thousands of his followers to Israel, a secular state that Robertson praises as part of God's plan, and has criticized the very idea of including Israeli-controlled land in a Palestinian state as part of "Satan's plan." He condemns Prime Minister Sharon's plan to withdraw from Gaza, for "Only God could decide on transfers of biblical land." Since Robertson claims to be God's official spokesman, apparently only he has the right to decide the future of the Middle East.

Robertson's analysis is derived from his 19th-century dispensationalist theology, whose adherents are working hard to bring about the end of the world, which entails, among other things, the conversion of all of the Jews in the state of Israel to a kind of Judeo-Christianity, which recognizes Jesus as its Messiah but worships Him *via* the temple cultus of the Old Testament. As I tried to explain to an American Zionist leader I met in Tel Aviv, with friends like Robertson, the Israelis do not need enemies.

If we look around the world today at the most violent and intractable conflicts—in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland, in the Balkans, in the Sudan—these trouble spots, so different in every way, share a common theme: The antagonists, who might easily find some common economic or political ground, are locked in a religious-historical hatred that makes resolution impossible. It is only in the Middle East, however, that some sizable population of Americans plays a decisive role in perpetuating the conflict. For any progress to be made toward peace in the Middle East, Americans—especially conservative Americans—must agree to demystify the issue by looking concretely at the problems without invoking ancient rights or the divine will.

Obviously, there can be serious disagreements among conservatives about the details, but any conservative foreign policy will be based on a number of principles: First, it will be patriotic, with the security of the nation as its primary objective. The Constitution of the United States established a government "to provide for the common defense," not to bring freedom to the world.

Second, it will be just and fair. Conservatives believe in principles of justice rooted in the tradition of natural law. Such policies are not only just but expedient. Unjust policies of aggression may seem attractive in the short run, but, in the long run, the resentments they cause are a source of enduring danger.

Third, conservatives are pragmatic. From the days of the French Revolution, leftists have called for global revolution, and that call has been heeded by communists, Nazis, and messianic advocates of democratic revolution. Conservatives have always preferred to deal with the world as it is and have refused to listen to the siren song of global democratic revolution, whether sung by Woodrow Wilson or by the neoconservative followers of Lev Trotsky. While it is the mark of leftists to dream glorious dreams of the future, conservatives know that they must study the past if they are to act pragmatically in the present.

Unfortunately, the history of the Middle East tends to be told by religious fanatics who care very little about the messy details, so long as the story can be made to show that "god" is on their side. All parties—Christians, Jews, and Muslims—regard Israel-Palestine as a holy land, but what are the boundaries? Even if we could assign definite borders to the Holy Land, we could not easily determine to whom it belongs today. Much blood has been spilled, and is even now being spilled, in attempts to answer that question. Some evangelical Protestants in the United States have a simple answer: The promise made to Abraham now extends to the state of Israel, which has the right to occupy not just Israel but the whole of ancient Palestine. This is, as many Israelis know, a recipe for unending war, the extinction of the Israeli state, and a second Jewish holocaust. It is also based on a very insubstantial historical foundation that is a product of Christian myth making and nationalist ideology.

How did the promise get handed down to the current state of Israel? It cannot be a religious dispensation, since few Israelis today make much of an attempt to maintain the practices of ancient Judaism. Perhaps it is carried in the genes, then. In the Middle East, however, there is no such thing as a pure race. By the time Abraham enters Canaan, some time after 2000 B.C., it is already a land dominated by peoples whose spoken languages belong to the Northwest branch of Semitic, which includes both Hebrew and Amoritic. The dominant ethnic group was later called Phoenician, but they called themselves *Can´ani* or Canaanites. In the Old Testament, we also hear of other nonsemitic peoples, such as Hurrians and Hittites, and, a little later, the Semitic Aramaeans, who took over Syria about 1200 (in the northwestern part of Canaan). These Aramaeans are linked by Deuter-



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onomy (26:5) with the Hebrews: "A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous."

The Old Testament tells us that some of the Hebrews migrated to Egypt. Modern scholars believe this took place during the period when the Hyksos—Palestinian Semites—invaded and ruled much of Egypt. When the Hyksos were overthrown, their allies and supporters could not have been very popular, and the Bible tells of the hardships suffered by the subjugated Jews.

Escaping from Egypt, the wandering Hebrews made their way back to Canaan. At that time, the Israelites would have hardly differed in language and culture from other Canaanite peoples, such as Moabites and Edomites (whose descent they traced to Jacob's brother Esau). The children of Israel were entering a well-developed though politically and ethnically divided land of thriving agriculture ("a land flowing with milk and honey") and prosperous cities—many of which were destroyed by the nomadic invaders.

The impression is given, at several places in the Old Testament, that the Jews exterminated the peoples they found in possession of the land, but intermarriage was frequent enough to pose a problem. In other words, the justification used by Christian Zionists today, who believe any action taken against Palestinians is demanded by God, is as false historically as it is morally.

The conquest of Canaan (as the archeological record and some scriptural texts reveal) was a patchy and uneven affair undertaken tribe by tribe and over a long period of time rather than as a concentrated national invasion and conquest. Even the identities of the 12 tribes were not actually fixed in the time of Joshua. Considerable intermarriage took place, and not only with the Israelites' polytheistic "cousins" but with the Philistines, who were an offshoot of the same stock that produced Mycenaean Greeks. King David took the wife of a Hittite, Bathsheba, while Ahab married Jezebel, the daughter of the Phoenician king of Tyre. The mixed stock of Jerusalem described by Ezekiel (16:3)—"Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite"—was not an exceptional case, and the creation of the nation of Israel required a long process of assimilation. To a large extent, the tribal communities were only unified in facing the dangers presented by their enemies: other Canaanites, Ammonites, and especially the Philistines.

The situation becomes infinitely more complex during the centuries of the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests. The northern kingdom of Israel was the first to fall, to the Assyrians. The number of Jews deported by the Assyrians and of non-Jews actually introduced into Israel is a subject of controversy. The newcomers—Babylonians, Assyrians, and even Hittites—would have had trouble adjusting, but, even after the settlers had intermarried with Israelites and adopted their religion, the so-called Samaritans were the object of bitter hatred from many Jews in the southern kingdom.

When the Babylonians conquered Judea, they took several thousand Jewish leaders and skilled craftsmen to Babylon. A subsequent revolt had even more disastrous consequences: The king was killed; the fiction of independence was ended; the walls and fortifications were destroyed; the Temple was razed; and thousands of the inhabitants of Judea were driven from their land.

Although the number of Jews who were forcibly deported at this time is difficult to estimate, it cannot have been very great. Current estimates suggest that roughly 90 percent remained, though others left in search of better opportunities. Nonetheless, Jewish morale must have been disproportionately affected by the deportation of much of the elite class. During this period of captivity, many Jews were allowed to return to Judea and its ruined capital, ruled by an appointed governor. In Babylonia itself, exiles seemed to have done well, and it was from these Babylonian exiles that a new Israel would be recreated. By the Macedonian period, a large percentage of Jews were living outside the land promised to Abraham.

Even the success of a thriving Hasmonean Jewish state was not sufficiently attractive to most Jews in the Middle East, who still preferred to live outside the borders of Judea. This state lived in an uneasy relationship with the Roman Empire, which incorporated its parts into the imperial provincial structure. Revolts in the first and second centuries A.D. resulted in the destruction of the Temple and the forced withdrawal of Jews from Jerusalem and some part of Judea. Jews were never expelled from all of what is modern Israel. Most Jews, even before their wars with Vespasian and Hadrian, chose to live outside the Promised Land, and this pattern continued throughout ancient, medieval, and modern times down to today.

Palestinian nationalism rests on an equally shaky foundation. There was no Palestinian people before the creation of the state of Israel, only a population of Muslim and Christian Arabs living under Turkish rule before the breakup of the Ottoman Empire and then under the British Mandate. In the 20th century, their national dream, if they had one, was of a united Arab state liberated from Turkish officials. They were no more native to the soil than the Greeks or Turks or Franks who had come to the region, and, to the extent they were Arabs, they represented an invading force that had stolen the land from Syrian Christians and Jews who lived under Byzantine rule.

It is important to note, however, that, after centuries of Islamic persecution, which seriously depleted their numbers, Christians have been subject since the late 1940's to unfair and discriminatory treatment from the government of Israel, which lumps them together with Palestinian Muslims. That Christians in Palestine often side with the descendants of their persecutors speaks volumes about their recent experiences under a nationalist Israeli state.

Religion is the lifeblood of any people, but that blood can be poisoned by hatred. Any reasonable settlement between Israel and the Palestinians will include a provision for the preservation and use of the holy places of Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Sensible people in both camps understand that nothing good can come out of perpetuating the nationalist myths that have so inflamed the region. Tomy Lapid, a Jew from Yugoslavia and leader of the Secular movement, calls for an Israeli state that offers equal rights to all its citizens regardless of ethnic and religious backgrounds. Mahmoud Abbas, the new president of Palestine, understands the need for negotiations and an end to terrorism. Such men can work out pragmatic solutions to the conflict.

American conservatives cannot pretend to solve the problems for Israelis and Palestinians, but we can see to it that, here in America, our policies are formulated on the basis of a just assessment of the American interest. Those of us who are Christian—whether Orthodox, Catholic, or Protestant—should repudiate the false prophets who claim to speak in God's name while calling for the blood of innocent human beings. c



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## *My* Fisherman
*by Andrew Huntley*

"The man who is to be a bishop, then, must
be one with whom no fault can be found . . . "
I Timothy 3:2

A *man*: not one of the effete,
Nor one declined to Sodom's heat;
If virginal, who *might* have wed—
And never slights the marriage bed
(Hence trusted by each man and wife
Protecting their ecstatic life).

A liturgist, both old and new,
Who, mastering his Fortescue,
Has ditched the Novus Ordo quite
To worship with Tradition's rite;
Yet one not *so* fastidious
That *every* trend is hideous.

A scholar—but a *pleasured* mind,
To culture never dull or blind,
Who knows his poets off by heart—
Who travels *all* the realms of art;
Yet, at man's deep debate—at need—
The rock that infidels must heed . . .

But, O, the Fall! Bishops are marred!
(As all, from Paradise debarred);
Still, never may their Cross be made
Their tool to ply the Devil's trade:
Make death seem life—killing to rule
What's good, what's true, what's beautiful.



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*by Philip Jenkins*

# The Georgia Atrocity

Michael Stokes Paulsen, a learned professor at the University of Minnesota, is a connoisseur of legal atrocities. In a recent article in the *Notre Dame Law Review*, he tries to award the palm for "The Worst Constitutional Decision of All Time," while he teaches a course on "Atrocious Cases." In the spirit of Dr. Paulsen's work, I would like to suggest some candidates for his consideration. I will resist proposing decisions that are merely incompetent, incoherent, or plain stupid. In order to achieve the full status of legal atrocity, a case must have social or legal implications that are wide, potentially devastating, and downright frightening.

And I already have a fine candidate. This January, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia ordered the Cobb County school district to remove stickers it had placed in biology texts that made the following statement:

> This textbook contains material on evolution. Evolution is a theory, not a fact, regarding the origin of living things. This material should be approached with an open mind, studied carefully and critically considered.

This decision was received along predictable political and cultural lines, with social conservatives generally denouncing it, and liberals and secularists praising the court's decisive reassertion of evolution in science education.

As described so far, the federal-court decision falls far short of atrocious status. One might well agree with the court in rejecting the slanted use of the term "theory" by Cobb County authorities. In popular speech, "a theory" might be another way of saying that it is "just your opinion," which is neither worse nor better than anyone else's. That is not what scientists mean when they speak of evolution. For the overwhelming majority of scientists, species changed and evolved over many millions of years, and the fact of change is thoroughly documented in the fossil record. Even the old challenge about "So where are the missing links?" has been effectively answered by the well-studied sequence of fossils showing the biological changes over time that gave rise to modern whales. In this sense, evolution is a fact, though one is perfectly at liberty to theorize about the mechanisms involved in the process, and the role of divine guidance or intervention. Darwinism is one theory that, in its pristine form, is not widely held today; but the reality of species change over long eons is very widely held as sober fact. To use an analogy, gravity is a fact, but the means of explaining it are theories, and explanations that seem to work today may well seem jejune in 10 or 20 years.

But whether or not one believes in evolution, the federal-court decision in the Cobb County case was still an atrocity. To understand why, just look again at the exact wording of the textbook stickers, and try to find references to God, religion, Creation, the supernatural, or the Nicene Creed. Then read the statement of Judge Clarence Cooper, who complained that,

> By denigrating evolution, the school board appears to be endorsing the well-known prevailing alternative theory, creationism or variations thereof, even though the sticker does not specifically reference any alternative theories . . . Rather, the distinction of evolution as a theory rather than a fact is the distinction that religiously motivated individuals have specifically asked school boards to make in the most recent anti-evolution movement. . . . By adopting this specific language, . . . the Cobb County School Board appears to have sided with these religiously motivated individuals.

Therefore, the stickers constituted an unconstitutional endorsement of religion in the public schools.

If I may translate the Northern District decision: The Cobb County stickers say nothing whatever about religion, and, in fact, they explicitly advocate critical and open-minded approaches of the kind preached by secular-leaning scientists over the past few centuries. Nevertheless, they "appear to" express views of the sort that, in the court's view, are commonly associated with religion. And what are the criteria for "appearing to endorse" religious principles? Since none are given, the answer must be: *I, the judge, know how you religious people talk, and this sounds to me like it fits into the familiar pattern.* In other words, these are very much the same criteria that, back in the 1920's, were used to convict people for seditious or syndicalist speech, on the grounds that they used words that, to a judge's tender nose, reeked of anarchistic intent. Also echoing the old syndicalist prosecutions is the idea of guilt by association. If you say something of the sort that anarchists were saying, then you must belong to their ranks.

Let us build on those principles a little. What other ideas or opinions might be expressed in schools that historically are clearly associated with religious principles or founded in religious activism? Human equality is one obvious candidate. So is racial equality, as preached through the century by a variety of impassioned religious extremists, mainly Christian, from William Lloyd Garrison through Martin Luther King, Jr.

To take a more contemporary issue coming before the courts, abortion will long continue to be one of the most sensitive and divisive matters facing Americans. Though many opponents of abortion work from religious principles, that is by no means universally true, and there are many secular-minded pro-lifers. Fortunately, however, under the Cobb County principle, a judge can rule, simply, that all anti-abortion activism or legislation is religious in nature, because most of its supporters are religious; and it is therefore subject to judicial restriction in the name of separating Church and state.

On these grounds, I submit: We have a full-fledged atrocity. c



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# A Brief History of Quagmire

## Six Decades of Passionate Attachment

**by Doug Bandow**

The United States is the world's sole superpower, a globe-spanning "hyperpower" with professed interests everywhere. Israel is a small nation of minimal resources, far from America. Under normal circumstances, such a country would not loom large in U.S. policy. Yet, in the post-September 11 world, Israel sits at the center of American strategy.

Israel's importance stems from both religion and propinquity. As the geographic refuge of the Jewish people and the culmination of Zionist ambitions, Israel embodies a unique transnational status; other nations exert a special ideological or ethnic draw internationally (America and China, respectively, for instance), but no other state so self-consciously offers a similar spiritual magnet. Thus, Israel has attracted support in America from most Jews and many Christians. Even many nonreligious people see Israel as a necessary response to the holocaust. That country's advocates are apt to cast Washington's relationship with Israel in moral, or even spiritual, terms. They point to Israel's status as a democracy surrounded by tyranny and cultural affinities with the West.

Moreover, Israel sits near the Middle East's great oil fields, creating her image as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" for Washington, countering such Arab states as Egypt and Syria, which forged close links with the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Today, Israel also lies in the midst of raging ethnic and religious conflicts that have brought terrorism to the American homeland and threatened the stability of the Gulf countries that supply the oil upon which Western economies run. As a result, Israel has won significant support from the American people, providing an hospitable environment within which Israel's friends make her political case.

Foreign policy, even more than domestic concerns, is rarely set by mass sentiments. Rather, government behavior generally is driven by interest groups that harness the intensity of even small numbers of activists. In this instance, American Jews, from religious to secular, have organized campaigns of, contributed to, and voted for politicians based on their support for Israel, generating significant backing for Israel among Democrats. And evangelical Christians have increasingly encouraged conservative Republicans to take a similar stand.

Energy and geostrategic concerns tend to have less salience in electoral politics, but they have caused business and policy elites to focus on the Middle East. Among them, perspectives on Israel differ: She sits close to the Persian Gulf oil fields, but her friendly relationship with America generates corresponding U.S.-Arab tensions. In the end, intellectuals provide a strategic framework; businessmen offer political backing; and officials implement federal policy supporting Israel. A combination of interests and interest groups thus ensures continuing U.S. intervention in the Middle East, largely on Israel's behalf. Although there is often disagreement on specific policies, such as military action against Iraq, there is wide support for expansive American involvement.

Britain, France, and Germany all preceded Washington as they struggled for economic influence in what was, before World War I, part of the Ottoman Empire. London emerged from that war with the dominant position, but the possibility of petroleum production in the Gulf attracted American intervention in the 1920's; aided by U.S.-government pressure, American firms soon won their first concessions. World War II enabled Washington to make further gains at the expense of Britain and France.

In a kind of rerun of Britain's involvement in the region, the United States sought to defend her regional positions by strengthening compliant ruling elites, such as the shah and the Saudi monarchy. The 1957 Eisenhower Doctrine offered U.S. aid to Middle Eastern nations threatened by "international communism." Richard Nixon's subsequent support for Israel provided a counterpoint to Soviet assistance to Israel's foes. To deter Moscow, in the late 1970's, President Jimmy Carter created a rapid-deployment force. In the ensuing decade, the Reagan administration aided Iraq in her bloody and lengthy war against Iran. In 1990, George H.W. Bush went to war with Baghdad, more to preserve the House of Saud than to liberate Kuwait, the formal public goal. Washington easily defeated Iraq but left Saddam Hussein in power. A desultory decade of U.N. weapons inspections, economic embargo, "no-fly zones," and frequent U.S. bombing followed. America backed her military units in Turkey and carrier forces in the Persian Gulf with Air Force units in Saudi Arabia. Our presence had acquired a permanent feel.

In the 1990's, the United States was involved in a policy of dual containment, attempting to restrain the geopolitical ambitions of both Iran and Iraq. It was, in the view of analyst Barbara Conry, "a virtual reorganization of the gulf region's politics and customary balance of power." The Clinton administration explicitly criticized the first Bush administration for not attempting to upend the *status quo* by restructuring the Middle East. Such restructuring became an explicit goal of the second Bush administration.

Only after ousting Saddam Hussein in early 2003 did Washington finally feel comfortable in announcing the planned withdrawal of most of its forces from Saudi Arabia. Indeed, in the wake of the failure to discover the alleged stockpiles of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz revealed that another goal of the war was to pave the way for pulling the U.S. military out of Saudi Arabia. However, that did not mean that Washington was prepared

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to leave the region: A long-term occupation of Iraq loomed, and the United States pressured Iran and Syria to cooperate on U.S. terms, as well as to change regimes. Access to oil remained central to U.S. policy, but Washington's goals had become much more ambitious.

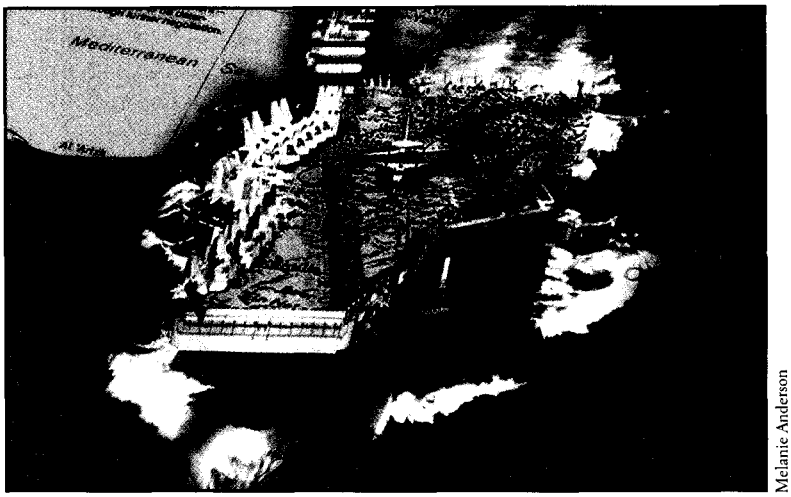
Iraq began as a Western ally, but a 1958 coup moved her on an independent course. In 1978, Saddam made a shift: He moved against communists domestically and shifted the country's trade westward. In the 1980's, the United States was Iraq's *de facto* ally in her war against Iran. America shared intelligence, provided financial credits, and facilitated exports of Iraqi oil. All that, along with U.S. ambassador April Glaspie's profession of Washington's disinterest in Iraq's dispute with Kuwait, helped convince Saddam that he need not fear U.S. reaction after he invaded Kuwait in 1990. Saddam bet wrong, however: Between 1990 and 2003, Baghdad and Washington were in a constant state of war.

During the 1958 Lebanon crisis, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles compared Arab nationalism to a flood that necessitated putting "sand bags around positions we must protect—the first being Israel and Lebanon and the second being the oil positions around the Persian Gulf." Such concern was well founded: In the 1950's, Egypt and Iraq shifted out of the Western orbit. Two decades later, Islamic fundamentalists helped overthrow the shah and displaced their moderate co-revolutionaries. Only with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 did Moscow appear poised to threaten Western access to petroleum, causing President Carter to warn that "An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States" and to create the Rapid Deployment Force for use in such an emergency.

Over the years, Washington took a number of steps to bolster friendly Arab states, including military intervention in Lebanon in 1958, aid and fleet movements in 1957 to back Jordan's King Hussein, and threats against a Syria perceived to be moving leftward. In those years, U.S. policy did not obviously center on any one nation. In 1982, the United States again placed troops in Lebanon. Although formally aimed at aiding the beleaguered Christian-dominated administration, this effort also assisted Israel in her invasion of Lebanon. Washington found itself entangled in a bitter civil war, leading to destructive suicide bombings in 1983 against its embassy and Marine Corps barracks, and subsequently withdrew its forces.

Israel's creation goes back to the famed Balfour Declaration of 1917, an attempt by Great Britain to exploit Zionism in her war against the Ottoman Empire, an ally of Germany. A combination of violence, including terrorism against British officials by Israeli independence forces, and belief that the holocaust's horrors justified creating a Jewish homeland, led Britain to turn the issue over to the recently created United Nations. The United Nations recommended a partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish sections.

Although U.S. Defense and State Department officials worried about the impact of an Israeli state on relations with Arab governments as well as Soviet expansion in the area, President Harry S. Truman, who had favored the Zionist cause before World War II, was sympathetic to the plight of European Jews who had survived Nazi mass murder. In hindsight, many Americans felt they could have done, or should have tried to do, more to help Jews escape Nazi-occupied Europe. Moreover, the image of British soldiers forcibly rebuffing holocaust survivors seeking refuge in Palestine generated public support for a Jewish homeland. Allied with these sentiments in practice, if not in spirit, were politicians who saw Israel's creation as a means of avoiding the relaxation of American immigration quotas. Zionists organized a powerful lobby. Truman worried about Jewish defections from the Democratic Party, which faced the resurgent Republicans. The United States not only voted for partition; she pressured friendly states to do so.




Melanie Anderson

The process was chaotic and violent. The majority of the British Mandate property was turned over to the minority Jewish population. Proposals for a U.N. trusteeship were rejected by the Jewish settlers, who proclaimed the state of Israel on May 14, 1948, upon the departure of the last British officials. Truman quickly granted *de facto* recognition to Israel, setting the course for a half-century of relations with the Middle East. Evan Wilson, who served in the Division of Near Eastern Affairs of the State Department, wrote that "our relations with the entire Arab world have never recovered from the events of 1947-48 when we sided with the Jews against the Arabs and advocated a solution in Palestine which went contrary to self-determination as far as the majority population of the country was concerned."

Despite America's support for Israel's creation, relations were not always close, notably during the Suez crisis in 1956. In those years, Washington viewed a close relationship with Israel as an impediment to improved relations with Arab countries and access to oil. But the Cold War spawned another important interest group behind Israel: anticommunist hawks. As Egypt and Iraq shifted away from the West, and other states looked internally vulnerable, Israel appeared to be the better bet. Presidents Kennedy and Johnson treated Israel accordingly and sold her offensive weapons. Washington seems to have signaled that it had no objection to Israeli action before the Six Day War in June 1967.

The more strongly Washington supported Israel as an anti-Soviet bastion in the Middle East, the more such a bastion seemed necessary. After the Six Day War, Nasser reportedly said that, while Washington wanted "us to minimize our dealings with the Soviet Union, it will drive us in the opposite direction altogether. The United States leaves us no choice." After that war, Moscow rearmed and trained the defeated Arabs. That, in turn, increased Washington's concerns about Soviet influence over the West's oil lifeline and induced America to draw even closer to Israel. The Arab attack in the 1973 Yom



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Kippur War made surprising initial gains, but Washington played a critical role in sustaining Israel with a multibillion-dollar weapons airlift; it was, in fact, the first time that the United States had provided arms as an outright gift. Washington also issued a worldwide military alert, including its nuclear forces, to discourage Moscow from intervening on behalf of the Egyptians.

The Carter administration was more measured in its backing of Israel and helped produce the Camp David accords, but the Reagan administration formalized an alliance with her that had gradually emerged as a major element in U.S. diplomacy and strategy well before the 1980's. President George H.W. Bush was prepared to push Israel for concessions in the peace process, but pro-Israel activists effectively used Congress to counteract his administration. His two successors, especially his son, have been more accommodating of Israel, and the Republican Congress has become, if anything, even more pro-Israeli. It approved measures recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital and warning the Bush administration against its perceived softness in backing the "Road Map for Peace."

Today, America's financial backing of her tiny ally, at some three billion dollars annually, is as much part of the federal budget as funding for the Washington Monument. And successive U.S. administrations underwrote the 1976 partial Sinai withdrawal, the 1978 Camp David Accord, détente with Jordan, and even the Palestinian Authority, once it entered into a dialogue with Israel. Money continues to flow to Egypt, despite her self-defeating economic policies, as well as to Jordan, for having made peace with Israel. (An attempt was made to buy peace with Syria in the same way.) At least some assistance to Turkey and even Central Asia arguably is related to Israeli security. It has been estimated that Israel received, in current dollars, about $240 billion between 1973 and 2002; Egypt and Jordan collected another $139 billion over the same period.

The return on our investment has been scant. Despite the routine incantation of Israel's alleged security value to America, at no time during the Cold War did this "unsinkable aircraft carrier" actually act as one. To the contrary, both countries have found that their relationship has restricted their ability to respond to a variety of international challenges. Indeed, American success in Gulf War I required dissuading Israel from joining in the attack on Iraq, even after the latter had launched Scud missiles at Tel Aviv. "Unleashing" Israel would have threatened Arab support in America's war against Iraq, and, for the same reason, Washington plotted to ensure that Israel played no role in Gulf War II. An asset that can never be used is not much of an asset. Yet Israel's backers still advocate a vigorous partnership to deter regional aggression and aid the projection of American power in the Gulf.

With the end of the Cold War and the concomitant collapse of the traditional arguments for American micromanagement of the Middle East, advocates of expansive American involvement have offered other goals, ranging from containing Islamic fundamentalism to "making the Middle East safe for democracy." After September 11, stronger backing for Israel and war on Iraq were advanced as a means of defunding terrorist organizations and preventing the transfer of weapons of mass destruction to such forces. Such arguments were dubious, however: If the United States made every terrorist group her enemy, she would be taking on largely local forces around the globe.

Despite fevered attempts to find alternate justifications for old policies, U.S. attempts to micromanage Mideast politics, and particularly Washington's decision to attack Iraq, remain centered on Israel and Saudi Arabia. The alacrity with which the administration announced that it was withdrawing forces from Saudi Arabia after Saddam's fall demonstrated that Washington saw the elimination of his regime as a means of allowing the United States to pull out troops without endangering the pro-Western Saudi monarchy.

The world has moved on since the Cold War. There is no struggle for global dominance; regional powers provide no comparable threat to Western energy and economic interests; Israel is threatened by unconventional, not conventional, warfare; persistent U.S. support for Israel inflames, rather than discourages, terrorism against America. In such a world, the United States and Israel would be better off as friends than as allies.

Most obviously, Washington should phase out financial assistance. It could start by cutting aid by the amount (up to a billion dollars per year) used to support settlements in, and occupation of, the West Bank. Nor should bribes to Egypt and Jordan be necessary, since they are equal, if not greater, beneficiaries of peace. Israel could determine her own security policies, unhindered by Washington's hectoring. Her actions may seem counterproductive at times, yet she is a sovereign state entitled to tell Washington "no"—except that America guarantees Israel's security and underwrites her decisions, which entitles the United States to meddle constantly.

Localizing the conflict also would necessitate greater regional cooperation. Political solutions still would not come easily, but the absence of outside subsidies—less assistance for Israel, as well as reduced funding for Islamic terrorism against Israel resulting from the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and tougher U.S. policy toward Saudi Arabia—would put increased pressure on the parties to reach agreement. With no one else to blame, responsibility would finally begin and end in Israel, the West Bank, and surrounding states.

More so than in most areas of U.S. foreign policy, American involvement in the Middle East, though sprung from a kernel of U.S. national interest, has been transformed and misshapen through the interplay of varying interest groups. Naturally, the interests differ dramatically in their assessments of the problems and solutions, but all desire Washington to micromanage international problems to suit their own preferences. But with the end of the Cold War, the strongest justification for U.S. micromanagement of Middle Eastern affairs has disappeared.

In the future, Washington should concentrate on American interests, not on those of even friendly states, or on their interest-group allies in the United States. That means treating Israel like any other country that shares many, but not all, of America's values and interests. In the case of Arab states, that means encouraging stable energy supplies and dampening the hostility that helps spawn terrorism.

In short, America should develop policy toward the Middle East, including Israel, based on her own goals and moral ideals. This has not been the case for at least the last three decades, when influential interest groups rather than fundamental interests have driven U.S. policy in this region. The price of turning foreign policy into another form of domestic politics has been high: two wars in little more than a decade; persistent military occupation of the Middle East; participation in an ever-worsening guerrilla conflict; and suicidal terrorism reaching America's shores. The United States cannot afford another three decades of such a policy. c



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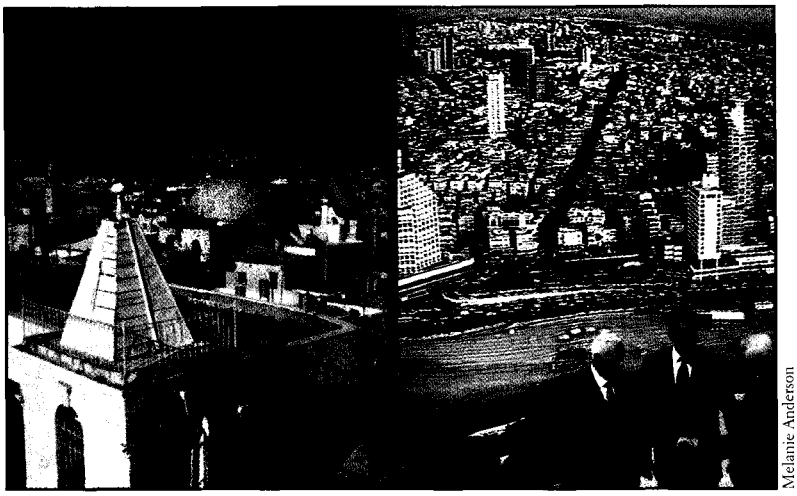
# A Tale of Two Cities

## Different Visions of Israel's Future

**by Leon T. Hadar**



Melanie Anderson

Many American Jews suffer culture shock when they first visit Tel Aviv. Having grown up watching reruns of the movie *Exodus*, they imagine Israelis as yarmulke-wearing cowboys valiantly defending their land against attacks from vicious tribes of Arab terrorists. Arriving in Tel Aviv, they find a bustling city full of secular, middle-class Israelis practicing their new religion of consumerism, planning their next trip to America or Europe as their Reebok-shod children dance to the latest rap tune. Instead of engaging in more heroic pursuits, they while away their evening hours in traditional Mediterranean pastimes: eating, drinking, gossiping, flirting, and engaging in passionate and noisy political debate.

Israel was supposed to be different—an original masterpiece, not a distant echo of ideas and trends produced in New York and London, which is what Tel Aviv, the first modern Hebrew city, turned out to be. It has become a symbol of a Western-oriented, "post-Zionist" Israel, to use a term coined by writers and artists who frequent the coffeehouses and bookstores in fashionable Shenkin Street. It describes an ascending ideological trend that is now affecting members of the intellectual class around the country, not unlike the way original Zionism itself—an ideology inspired by the notions of European "organic nationalism"—shaped the political debate among the Jewish intelligentsia in Vienna and Warsaw a century ago.

In Tel Aviv, the Oslo peace process gave rise to dreams of a new Arab-Israeli golden age. Young Israeli entrepreneurs were quick to devise schemes for potential business ventures with colleagues from Beirut and Amman. Tel Aviv's elites imagined Israel integrated in an E.U.-like New Middle East. With her sophisticated high-tech industries located in the "Silicon Wadi," her dynamic entrepreneurs, and her multilingual culture, Israel would become a global commercial center linking Europe to the Middle East. There were plans to draw up a constitution that would separate synagogue and state and provide full civil rights to the Arab citizens of Israel. The main focus at that time was on devising ways to bring about independence for the Palestinians that would involve the withdrawal of the Israeli military from the West Bank, the dismantlement of most Jewish settlements there, and the recognition of East Jerusalem as the capital of the new Palestinian state.

A decade later, despite the destruction and death brought about by the continuing Israeli-Palestinian violence during the Second Intifada, the spirit of Tel Aviv continues to be pragmatic and reformist. Most Westernized Israelis are not dreaming but searching for practical short-term arrangements that would lead to separation between over five million Jews who regard the land of Israel as their homeland and more than four million Arabs who desire independent Palestinian statehood. They seek a political-territorial divorce along the lines of the current division between Greeks and Turks on the neighboring island of Cyprus. This trend among Westernized Israelis is reflected in the growing support for the "wall of separation" straddling the West Bank.

That does not mean that the spirit of Tel Aviv has been crushed. It still wants Israel to become modern, to cut the messianic roots of Zionism and turn into a "normal" nation-state. That state would still have strong cultural and religious ties to Judaism and the Jewish world; it would be Jewish in the same way that Poland or Ireland are Catholic, but not in the same way that Pakistan or Iran are Muslim. In essence, post-Zionists want Israel to resolve some of the contradictions that Zionism and the term *Jewish state* have introduced, including in the relationship between synagogue and state, between statist economics and the free market, between national ethos and civil-

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rights principles, between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs.

The post-Zionist spirit of Tel Aviv is colliding with the messianic and extremist vision of Israel's future emanating from Jerusalem. It is a vision that seeks Greater Israel, a Jewish mini-empire stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River. It is also to be an exclusivist Jewish state where the Arabs, who could become the majority in a few years, would have a place only as second-class citizens—or as noncitizens, for that matter. Jerusalem's vision is that of a xenophobic and armed Jewish ghetto eternally fighting for its survival. Its symbol would not be the Americanized web designers and investment bankers of Tel Aviv but the Uzi-carrying and yarmulke-wearing religious zealots who lead the drive for new settlements. The militant Orthodox Jewish settlers in Hebron live in an atmosphere in which they are constantly prepared to encounter and administer violence. This situation culminated in the murder of 29 Muslim worshipers in the Cave of the Patriarchs by Baruch Goldstein, an American-born settler, in 1994. It was the spirit of Jerusalem that drove another Orthodox Jew, Yiga'al Amir, to murder Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, heralding the collapse of the 1990's peace process.

The neocons' grand strategy seeks a global American Empire that turns Europe and Russia into submissive satellites, establishes a hegemonic structure in the Middle East centered on a "democratic" Iraq, and turns most of the Middle Eastern states into U.S./NATO protectorates.

From the perspective of Tel Aviv, the Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria are a metaphor for the Israeli condition, while Jerusalem is the capital of "them"—the forces of reaction that Israeli liberals love to hate. It is in Jerusalem that the demons that threaten to suffocate the spirit of Tel Aviv are rearing their ugly heads: Zionist and Arab radicalism. As seen from Tel Aviv, militant settlers in the occupied Arab territories and Arab terrorists who place bombs in discos and coffee shops in Tel Aviv are rival twins. One vision mirrors the other, both based on a zero-sum game of a Greater Israel or a Greater Palestine: one state for only one people.

The end of the Cold War, the emergence of the Oslo peace process, and the rise of the age of globalization created the political conditions for the earlier ascendancy of Tel Aviv, of Labor, and of the "peace camp" led by Rabin and Ehud Barak. That strategy enjoyed support not only among the party's traditional electoral base, the Ashkenazi (European Jews) upper and middle classes, but among the members of the Sephardic community (Middle Eastern Jews) and immigrants from the former Soviet Union. These traditional Likud voters switched to Labor in the 1990's because Rabin and, later, Barak—two retired military generals and war heroes—were perceived as more effective in delivering security and prosperity. On the other hand, the Likud policies—including the building of new Jewish settlements—were seen as eroding Israel's chances of establishing a secure peace, as a drain on economic resources, and as a disincentive for foreigners to invest in Israel. The alliance between the Likud and the religious-Orthodox parties resulted in subsidies for religious institutions and tax exemptions to *yeshiva* (religious school) students, who are also exempt from military service. All of this infuriated many Israelis, especially the immigrants from the former Soviet Union, most of whom are secular.

Most importantly, perhaps, Likud policies were also hurting the relationship with Israel's leading global benefactor, the United States. The relationship with America is, for most Israelis, more than just the figure of three billion dollars in annual economic and military aid. The tie with Washington transcends family links, cultural influence, business relationships, and the strategic alliance. For most Israelis, isolated in a hostile region and an unfriendly world, America represents their lifeline to international society. Hence, an Israeli leader who fails to maintain the American connection or to "deliver" the United States—or, worse, who harms those ties—would eventually suffer in the polls. That is what happened to the Likud coalition under Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, when the administration of President George H.W. Bush threatened to cut aid to Israel unless it ceased its settlement policy in the West Bank.

Presidents George H.W. Bush and Clinton embraced Labor-led governments committed to a peace strategy that seemed to reflect the regional and global interests of Washington. The Oslo peace process made it possible for Rabin and Barak to get Israel out of her isolation and to establish diplomatic ties with Jordan and several other Arab countries. The approach adopted by Tel Aviv seemed to be a winning formula at home and abroad. Labor's ability, and Likud's failure, to deliver security and economic progress succeeded in winning over traditional Likud voters and brought both Rabin and Barak into power.

A decade later, the regional and global environments, including Israel's relationship with the United States, are no longer conducive to the promotion of Tel Aviv's agenda. The never-ending Israeli-Palestinian violence, the perception of a growing global clash of civilizations resulting from September 11, and the ensuing U.S.-led "War on Terror" have helped to produce a new political reality: the reemergence of the Likud as the key player in the nation's politics and foreign policy. Domestic, regional, and international changes have not been conducive to the idea of "normalizing" Israel, but she has come under the spell of Jerusalem's messianic Zionism. If anything, the Intifada only strengthened public support for separation from the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza and for the removal of Jewish settlements from those areas.

Contrary to the arguments raised by Likud leaders and their allies in the United States, the crisis of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations does not demonstrate the impossibility of resolving or even managing the conflict between the two peoples. In reality, the "Arab-Israeli conflict" has been transformed into a local civil war between Jews and Arabs over land. The war,



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with its national, ethnic, and religious dimensions, is clearly a human tragedy, but it is not very different from many national, ethnic, and religious conflicts around the world: in the Balkans (Serbs *versus* Croats; Albanians *versus* Serbs; Bosnian Croats *versus* Bosnian Muslims); in the Caucasus (Armenians *versus* Azeris); in the Levant (Maronites *versus* Arab Muslims); and in the Fertile Crescent (Kurds *versus* Arabs; Turkmens *versus* Kurds; Assyrians *versus* Turkmens). The list is long, from the Balkans to the borders of China.

We should not lose sight of the big picture. Saddam is gone. The armies of Israel and the main Arab nations, backed by their global patrons, are not about to get engaged in a destructive and costly war. The old Arab-Israeli conflict has been "de-internationalized" in the aftermath of the Cold War. It is no longer intertwined with the global confrontation of the last century. It has been transformed to a manageable local affair that does not threaten to expand. It has been localized and reduced to its true dimensions, to a "normal" national conflict involving fewer than ten million Israelis and Palestinians.

That is a depressing reality to many Zionists and Pan-Arabists. They need their respective historical narratives of grandeur: that of the Bible, of two Jewish commonwealths in the Holy Land, persecution by non-Jews, the holocaust; and, on the other hand, that of the Koran, the golden age of the Arab empires, the struggle against Western imperialism. It is a form of middle-age crisis for two national groups. They look in their mirrors and find that there is a major discrepancy between their early dreams and the sad facts of life. One way of explaining the intertwining of Zionism with Jewish messianic ideologies, and of Arab nationalism with Islamic fundamentalism, is to see them as rearguard ideological battles by groups that try to recycle the historical narratives of national movements. Those movements were established by secular figures—Christians, on the Arab side; assimilated Jews, on the Zionist side—and are being reshaped as religious fantasies.

Washington was forced during the Cold War to expand its commitments in the Middle East, as part of a three-pronged strategy to contain Soviet expansion in the region; to secure Western access to oil; and to ensure the survival of Israel. The end of the Cold War, the erosion in the influence of OPEC, and Israel's emergence as an advanced economic power and nuclear-military player create an opportunity for Washington to start adopting a policy of "constructive disengagement" from the Middle East and to retire Israel as its "strategic asset." The White House would not have to tolerate Israeli policies that run against American interests and values, and Israel, instead of trying to market herself as America's "unsinkable aircraft carrier," would be forced to adopt new strategic doctrines.

Since 1991, Washington has moved to perpetuate a costly "unilateral moment" instead. It prevented the formation of independent regional-security systems and deterred other global players, including the European Union, from exerting influence. That policy was driven by an interesting alliance of the Israeli and oil lobbies. Pro-interventionist and pro-Israeli neoconservative intellectuals provided it with an ideological rationalization—the *Pax Americana*. Such a policy was bound to induce anti-American sentiments in the Arab and Muslim worlds and lead to a political backlash against the United States, including terrorism.

It need not have been that way. When George H.W. Bush and his secretary of state took steps to reduce aid to Israel as a way of expressing the administration's displeasure, they set in motion a process of dramatic change in Israeli policies, leading to direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations in Oslo and peace accords with almost no U.S. involvement. The sense that the Americans were not willing to support the annexationist and messianic Israeli policies was instrumental in forcing Israel to move toward peace. At the same time, the localization of the Arab-Israeli conflict, with the inability of the Palestinians to get either a global player (the moribund Soviet Union) or Arab states (Egypt and Syria) to provide them with military support, drove the Palestinians to a policy of détente. In the end, Oslo failed because of the decision by the Israelis—supported by the Clinton administration—to "go all the way" and try to reach a final and comprehensive solution, instead of continuing with a set of interim agreements. An argument can be made that President Clinton's decision to adopt a hyperactive U.S. diplomatic role in managing the negotiations, and what resembled a psychotherapy session at Camp David in 2001, helped trigger the *Intifada* by creating undue expectations on both sides.

In reality, the "Arab-Israeli conflict" has been transformed into a local civil war between Jews and Arabs over land. The war, with its national, ethnic, and religious dimensions, is clearly a human tragedy, but it is not very different from many national, ethnic, and religious conflicts around the world.

There is no rationale for placing the Israel-Palestine conflict at the top of the U.S. foreign-policy agenda, and no explanation why a benign neglect of that conflict would have an adverse effect on core U.S. national interests. The United States has no "moral obligation" to act. As in many other conflicts around the world, if both sides are willing to pay the costs of what they regard as a fight for their survival, there is no reason why the Americans should save them from themselves. The bloodshed will end when both sides tire of it and conclude that their respective interests would be served more effectively by negotiating.

If Washington adopts a policy that is based on American national interests and values, it should state its unwillingness to maintain the *status quo* in its relationship with Israel, which only helps to sustain policies that run contrary to those interests and values. If economic aid helps to perpetuate the state-controlled structures in their economy, it should be reduced or eliminated. If the security alliance with Israel and the huge military aid to her do not advance American interests, those policies should be reassessed. The notion of U.S. "construc-



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tive disengagement" applies both to Israel and to the so-called "moderate" and "pro-American" authoritarian regimes in the region, such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt (countries whose citizens led the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States). These are policies that should advance U.S. interests and elevate those players in Israel and the Middle East whose policies help preserve those interests.

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There is no rationale for placing the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians at the top of the U.S. foreign-policy agenda, and no explanation why a benign neglect of that conflict would have an adverse effect on core U.S. national interests. The United States has no "moral obligation" to act.

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In the aftermath of September 11 and the ensuing War on Terror, the impression in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem is that the White House has decided to ally itself with the latter. George W. Bush and some of his advisors, especially those making policy in the Pentagon, seemed to have adopted the Likud Party's spin. That September 11 took place a few months after the start of the second *Intifada*, while the Bush administration was trying to devise its own approach toward the Israel-Palestine problem, turned out to be a political opportunity for neoconservatives in the administration, such as Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, and their neoconservative allies in Congress, the media, and think tanks. The neocons successfully promoted their agenda of perpetuating America's unipolar status worldwide by lavishing support on Israel.

Not surprisingly, the American strategy is seen in the Arab world and elsewhere as part of an effort to dominate the Middle East. George W. Bush has chosen to turn the approach of his father on its head. The policies advanced by the neocons, who had opposed the Oslo Accords and the concessions offered by Barak at Camp David, sent a signal to the Israeli public that voting for the Likud would not result in a political backlash by Washington. The neocons and some Bush-administration officials and Republicans in Congress are starting to make Sharon look like a dove, as several Israeli columnists have suggested.

The neocons' grand strategy seeks a global American Empire that turns Europe and Russia into submissive satellites, establishes a hegemonic structure in the Middle East centered on a "democratic" Iraq, and turns most of the Middle Eastern states, including a mini-Palestinian entity, into U.S./NATO protectorates. This seems to be another attempt to square the circle for Greater Israel by lessening the costs of Israeli expansionist policies. It would create a regional environment in which American hegemony, fractured and weakened Arab states, and a pro-American Turkey would place no constraints on the ability of Israel to pursue ambitious goals. In short, the American Empire would make the Middle East safe for Greater Israel.

Almost 100 years after Great Britain and France advanced their own imperial plans in the Middle East, the United States is about to follow the same dangerous path. American military power and the lack of any global challenger to her current status allowed the United States to achieve her military goals in Iraq very quickly, but she now faces new challenges. A civil war in Iraq between the Kurds, Sunni Arabs, and Shiite Muslims may be averted, but the strengthening of radical Islamic groups and the rise of anti-American terrorism may not. Moreover, the rising costs of maintaining the American Empire, including U.S hegemony in the Middle East and military control of Iraq and her geographical neighborhood, could start testing the willingness of Congress and the American public to finance and support such huge commitments. Expansion of America's military commitments in the Middle East and other regions could induce the same kind of inflationary pressures and erosion of the U.S. dollar that accompanied America's war in Vietnam, at a time when the European Union and China, both of which would be dependent on oil resources in the Middle East, would be taking giant steps to enhance their global economic competitiveness *vis-à-vis* the United States.

All of this should also worry Israeli policymakers if Israel, in the new era of the American Empire, becomes a modern-day crusader state, an outlet of a global power whose political, economic, and military headquarters are on the other side of the world. American commitment to the security of the Israeli province would always remain uncertain and fragile, reflecting changes in the balance of power in Washington and the shifting dynamics of American politics and economics. In the eyes of the Arab and Muslim nations, as well as those of other powers (especially those challenging the international *status quo*), Israel would be perceived as the "weakest link" in the American Empire. A weaker and less-confident America may come under pressure at home and abroad to reduce her global commitments, leaving Israel vulnerable not only to Arab and Muslim nations but to other anti-*status quo* powers.

Ironically, the original mission of classical Zionism was to turn Europe's Jews into a normal people, living in a normal state and able to protect themselves—not dependent on others for their survival. Most Israelis remain committed to that goal. There is an alternative to the Greater Israel approach: End the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza; establish security "red lines" that would make it clear to the Palestinians and other potential adversaries in the region that Israel would use all her military might if they cross those lines (it is called deterrence); and focus the energies and resources of Israel on developing a "normal," economically and militarily strong nation-state.

It is not too late for the Israelis to figure out a path toward normalcy in the Middle East. It may not be "new," as some of them had hoped, but it is the region where they have to survive and coexist with the Palestinians and their other neighbors in the next generations as an independent nation-state, not as a crusader state whose fate could be determined by the decisions of a foreign and distant power.



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# Israel and America

## Parallel Lives, Similar Mistakes

**by Ivan Eland**

James Lukoski

In the 2000 presidential campaign, George W. Bush promised a more humble U.S. foreign policy. Five years later, that pledge has turned out to be nothing but disingenuous rhetoric used to contrast his campaign with the activist foreign policy of the Clinton-Gore administration. Of course, the Bush administration would claim that September 11 changed everything. Yet Paul O'Neill, President Bush's former treasury secretary, and Richard Clarke, his former chief counterterrorism advisor, have revealed that the administration was champing at the bit to invade Iraq well before September 11 and in spite of the fact that the threat of Al Qaeda was far more pressing. This indicates that President Bush never had any intention of adopting the promised, "more humble" foreign policy.

Similarly, early on, the administration noted that both sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict appeared unwilling to take real steps to solve it. Its initial rhetoric indicated that it would take a more "hands off" approach to the conflict—in contrast to Bill Clinton's frenetic efforts to reach a solution. Yet the Bush administration then flip-flopped again and adopted a more activist policy that its predecessor, thus continuing the political tradition of criticizing your predecessor during the election and adopting his polices after taking office.

On both general U.S. foreign policy and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, President Bush would have been better off if he had followed his own advice. The bold Bush policy of preemptive (really, preventative) war is an attempt to imitate the offensive doctrine of the small state of Israel—on which the administration has slathered admiring support. This offensive strategy is likely to be equally disastrous for both nations.

Despite being on the opposite side of the globe, Israel's security situation, in some ways, is a microcosm of that faced by the United States. Israel is a regional superpower that no longer has a peer rival in the Middle East. Her existence has not been threatened since 1973, and the U.S. occupation of Iraq has enhanced her security. Similarly, the United States, a global superpower, faces no equivalent adversary after the demise of the Soviet Union. Like Israel, with her nuclear and conventional-military predominance in the Middle East, the United States is the most dominant military power, both relatively and absolutely, in world history. A peer military competitor for the United States is likely to be 20 to 30 years away.

Both the Israeli and the U.S. security establishments overrate the general threat from "rogue" states with "weapons of mass destruction" (WMD's). Israel worried about Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Libya getting such weapons. The United States worried about all of them plus North Korea. The concern was exaggerated. The WMD moniker usually refers to nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, but only nuclear weapons are true and reliable weapons of mass destruction. They alone combine destructive power with reliability, but nuclear weapons require fissionable material that is difficult to obtain and requires sophisticated equipment, infrastructure, and expertise to generate. None of the "rogues," except North Korea, is suspected of currently possessing nuclear weapons. Both Israel (regionally) and the United States (globally) have nuclear dominance that should deter the use of the few warheads that those relatively poor countries could muster.

Although the threat to the existence of both Israel and the United States has greatly diminished, lesser but still significant threats have recently become more challenging for both countries. Their change-resistant military establishments continue to invest excessively in weapons to combat old threats, however,

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while remaining stymied by guerrilla warfare and terrorism. In Vietnam and now in Iraq, the United States has been befuddled by inferior guerrillas using hit-and-run attacks and then melting back into the jungle or urban setting. Similarly, despite Israel's tough tactics against terrorism over the years, it has become, if anything, a bigger problem for that nation.

Hezbollah and other Islamic fighters used guerrilla tactics and terrorism to beat back the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the 1980's and then to compel Israel to withdraw from Lebanon altogether. Guerrilla warfare, insurrection, and terrorism also compelled Israel to recognize and negotiate with the PLO in 1993. But the geography of the West Bank has permitted Palestinian attackers, unlike those of Hezbollah, to create a strategic threat to Israel's main cities. During the last 17 months of Israel's military occupation of southern Lebanon, only 21 Israeli soldiers were killed. By contrast, during the first three years of the second *Intifada*, almost 900 Israelis lost their lives, most of them civilians.

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If a change in U.S. policy caused Israel to reach a consensual settlement with the Palestinians, the Israelis would be more prosperous and secure. Getting rid of the "terrorism as war" paradigm and substituting a "terrorism as a crime" framework would be more effective and less dangerous for Israel.

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Guerrilla warfare is the most effective form of warfare in history, and terrorism does not require a territorial base. As Mark Heller of Tel Aviv University notes, traditional offensive preemptive tactics do not provide a satisfactory solution to such low-intensity conflict. Militants have developed suicide attacks (against civilians and military targets alike) to strike at the stronger party. Because the attackers are zealous, use cheap and unsophisticated means to attack, can secretly move into the stronger party's vulnerable rear areas, and have no home address to hold at risk, they are hard to deter, intercept, or defend against. Their attacks are designed to be spectacular and generate fear well beyond their destructive power. Although not existential—even if the attackers bought, stole, or built and effectively employed a nuclear or biological weapon—this threat is still substantial to the Israeli and U.S. homelands.

Dissimilarities do exist. The population from which the attackers arise lies very close to or, in some cases, is inside Israel. In contrast, the population spawning the attacks against the United States is half a world away. Terrorists, however, have made numerous attacks on U.S. facilities overseas and closer to the attackers' base of operations. The terrorist threat to the relatively small Jewish homeland comes largely from the confined, and soon to be completely fenced, areas of Gaza and the West Bank. The Israeli military can fairly easily monitor and conduct operations in that relatively small region. By contrast, the threat to the global American empire—the large, target-rich U.S. homeland and its numerous overseas targets—is the worldwide terror network of Al Qaeda and affiliated groups.

Israel and the United States have chosen to fight a broad "War on Terror" in the same way—with aggressive, offensive preemptive and preventative military attacks, in contrast to most other countries, which view terrorism as a *crime*, to be fought more quietly with intelligence and law-enforcement resources. After September 11, the Bush administration joined Israel in countering terrorism by using a "war," rather than a "crime," metaphor. The idea is to take the fight to the terrorists' home turf—to keep them occupied while destroying their networks and infrastructure—so that they cannot launch attacks on the U.S. or Israeli homelands.

In the short term, this strategy has the advantage of potentially reducing the number of such attacks. After Prime Minister Ariel Sharon ordered Israeli forces into the West Bank and Gaza, the number of suicide attacks in Israel proper dropped. In the case of the United States, U.S. forces did take out Al Qaeda's sanctuary and training infrastructure in Afghanistan. But the Bush administration's 2004 campaign claim—that this offensive strategy has resulted in no significant terrorist attack on U.S. soil since September 11—differs from its own officials' warnings that it is a matter of "when, not if" another major strike will occur. Furthermore, Al Qaeda and other Islamic groups normally infiltrate the target area and then lay low for a long period so that they have time to plan the attack, and everyone gets used to their presence. So the absence of a major event on U.S. soil since September 11 proves nothing. The rash of attacks on friendly and allied nations during that same period—in Turkey, Morocco, Indonesia, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Spain—indicates that Al Qaeda is still active and dangerous to the United States.

The continuous presence of Israeli forces in the occupied territories allows more intelligence to be gathered on terrorist cells and military action to be taken on that information to kill or capture the attackers or strike at their infrastructure (training facilities, bomb-making laboratories, and safe houses), and curfews impede the movement of the terrorists. The U.S. Army sent personnel to Israel to learn aggressive counterterrorism tactics, which are now being applied in Iraq. Such tactics include destroying buildings used by terrorists and the houses of families of suspected militants, holding those families hostage until terrorists turn themselves in, quarantining towns, and using heavy firepower in urban areas.

Applying such techniques necessitates violating certain norms of civilized behavior that both Israel and the United States have pledged to uphold. International human-rights groups have criticized Israel for excesses that include "unlawful killings, obstruction of medical assistance and targeting of medical personnel, extensive and wanton destruction of property, torture and cruel and inhumane treatment, unlawful confinement and the use of 'human shields'"; destruction of homes, public buildings, and infrastructure; seizing Palestinian land to expand the settlements; using massive bombs against targeted individuals in Palestinian residential areas; and holding hundreds of detainees in administrative detention on the basis of



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secret evidence, "which neither they nor their lawyers were allowed to see or to challenge in court."

None of these excesses excuse the slaughter of innocent Israeli civilians, of course. Yet this does present the other side of the argument that the American media often ignores. If the Israelis use a one-ton bomb in a confined residential area to kill one Hamas activist, when does excessive collateral damage become terrorism? If terrorism is defined as "the purposeful killing or harming of civilians to create fear to motivate them to pressure their government or other societal groups to change policies," then the Israelis may also be guilty of terrorism. It is disquieting that the U.S. Army is looking to Israeli tactics as a model for how to deal with the insurgency in Iraq.

The U.S. Marines, whose specialty is smaller wars, realize that the short-term gains of using such aggressive methods are more than outweighed by the long-term consequences of alienating the local population—the support of which is key to winning a guerilla war. Some current and former high-level officials in the Israeli security services have also reached that realization. Lt. Gen. Moshe Ya'alon, Israel's military chief of staff, said of Sharon's use of aggressive tactics against the Palestinians that "The tight closure being enforced on the Palestinians only generates hatred that will explode in our face." Four former heads of Shin Bet, the Israeli internal-security agency, agreed with General Ya'alon. According to one of them, Carmi Gilon, Sharon "is dealing solely with the question of how to prevent the next terrorist attack" and avoids "the question of how we get out of the mess we find ourselves in today." One of Ya'alon's predecessors, Gen. Dan Shomron, had to cut short his tenure as chief of staff when he made the mistake of speaking the truth, during a closed meeting, about the first *Intifada* (1987-90), saying that the insurrection "has no military solution."

Similarly, U.S. excesses could act (and already are acting) as a recruiting tool for jihadists around the world. In Iraq, the U.S. adoption of combative Israeli tactics will likely fuel the continuing resistance and erode the critical support of the Iraqi population. More broadly, the Bush administration has used September 11 as an excuse to fight a broad War on Terror in order to carry out a veiled expansion of the American Empire into Iraq and Central Asia, which will only swell the ranks of jihadists with volunteers and cash. Foreign fighters are continuously flowing into Iraq to help battle U.S. forces (much the same happened when the "infidel" Soviet Union invaded the Islamic nation of Afghanistan), and numerous post-September 11 attacks by jihadists have occurred around the world.

In the case of Israel, only a consensual settlement involving a "land for peace" swap will curtail the bloodshed. The four security chiefs now endorse a two-state solution involving an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and most of the West Bank, even if that means a showdown between the Israeli government and its settlers. Through reduced taxes and subsidies, the Israeli government originally encouraged those settlers to migrate to the West Bank and Gaza, hoping to create an irreversible reality on the ground. Something has changed: Even conservative Israelis are now beginning to favor a two-state solution. They know that Arab population increases threaten to make Jews a minority in the area from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River. Jews' share in the total population within that area has declined from 60 percent in 1985 to 55 percent in 2000. Israel has the choice of giving up territory for a separate Palestinian state or replacing democracy with minority rule similar to apartheid in South Africa. Israeli withdrawals from those areas and the building of a fence in the West Bank will only fan the flames of the insurrection. The Palestinians believe that the Israelis are trying unilaterally to dictate the terms of a settlement rather than to negotiate one. An Israeli withdrawal will only be acceptable to the Palestinians if it is achieved by mutual agreement. Also, a negotiated settlement with Syria over the Golan Heights and Lebanon is the only solution likely to end the terrorism of Hezbollah.

Similarly, the United States should avoid unneeded military interventions in Islamic nations, pull back her forces from Muslim soil, and withdraw support and aid from both Israel and despotic governments in the Arab world. The United States is hated in the Muslim world not because of American culture or political and economic freedoms (as President Bush has alleged) but because of her policies toward the Middle East.

> Both the Israeli and the U.S. security forces overrate the threat from "rogue" states with "weapons of mass destruction." Israel worried about Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Libya getting such weapons. The United States worried about all of them plus North Korea.

Both Israel and the United States, because of improvements in their overall security situations, can now afford to take risks to alleviate the one remaining threat that they each face: terrorism. Israel's defense would not require retention of a swath of territory on the eastern side of the West Bank abutting the Jordan River. Although favored by Prime Minister Sharon and his cabinet, a fence encircling the entire West Bank—leaving the Palestinians only 53 percent of the land there and breaking up Palestinian areas into noncontiguous cantons—would not be needed to ensure Israeli security. Virtually the entire West Bank could be given up without security complications. Such Israeli flexibility might make a consensual "land for peace" deal possible. And such a deal would likely drastically mitigate anti-Israeli terrorism.

To push Israel to reach such a trade-off and to reduce her own risk of blowback, the United States needs to change her own policies. U.S. support for Israel underwrites Sharon's counterproductive (even for Israel) hard-line policies. Israel is the foremost recipient of U.S. largesse—receiving about three billion dollars per year in economic and military aid. The weapons used by Israel to quell the Palestinian uprising have been subsidized by the United States. Also, America's largely uncritical diplomatic support emboldens Israeli military tactics



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and leads to more pressure on the Palestinians to make greater concessions in the dispute. In addition, it is unwise, merely for Israel's benefit, to paint a bull's-eye on the United States by conducting American covert action on militant groups that do not currently focus their attacks on U.S. targets. Hezbollah is as effective at terrorism as Al Qaeda and could again begin frequently attacking U.S. targets. Its attacks on U.S. targets dissipated dramatically after the U.S. Marines withdrew from fighting Muslim groups in Lebanon's civil war during the 1980's. The reduction of Hezbollah's attacks graphically demonstrates the positive effect of adopting a policy of U.S. nonintervention in nonstrategic areas of the globe.

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The Bush administration has used September 11 as an excuse to fight a broad War on Terror in order to carry out a veiled expansion of the American Empire into Iraq and Central Asia, which will only swell the ranks of jihadists with volunteers and cash.

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Although unwavering U.S. support for Israel satisfies politically powerful domestic interest groups, it is unnecessary for U.S. security and actually undermines it. If the primary U.S. post-Cold War security goal in the Middle East has been to secure plentiful supplies of cheap oil, loosening ties with Israel and improving them with Arab states is the rational policy. In other words, the United States should become a neutral, honest broker in the Middle East. A new, more evenhanded policy would allow the United States to enhance relationships with Arab states, but on a more equal plane than at present. In addition to terminating aid to Israel, the United States should end patron-client relationships with autocratic Arab states (*e.g.*, Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states) and the concomitant aid.

If both parties to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute become exhausted and want to settle the dispute permanently, the United States could help mediate a settlement from a truly neutral position. America, however, has no strategic or moral imperative to solve this conflict—one of many around the world. It is especially ridiculous for the United States to pay reluctant parties in a dispute on the other side of the world to do what is in their best interest anyway—as the United States did to get the Camp David peace accords, by slathering Israel and Egypt with piles of foreign aid. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is tragic, and both sides would be better off if they made peace. Ultimately, however, it is their responsibility to do so, not that of the United States. Therefore, counterintuitively, a "tough love" U.S. policy toward each side in the conflict would have the best chance of leading to a viable long-term solution.

A lower and more neutral U.S. profile would put pressure on both sides of the conflict to settle it. As noted earlier, cutting off U.S. aid to Israel would put further pressure on the Israeli economy, and ending U.S. diplomatic cover for excessive Israeli military tactics would undermine their legitimacy. And although the United States currently puts more pressure on the Palestinians than on the Israelis, the Palestinians realize that one of the few restraints on Israeli behavior comes from the United States. If the United States were to take a lower profile in the Middle East peace process, the Palestinians would realize that the more-powerful Israeli side might adopt an even more hardline policy than it follows now. That possibility could very well encourage the Palestinian side to decide to be more serious about a comprehensive solution to the problem. The current activist U.S. stance inadvertently insulates both sides from pressures that could help, ultimately, to solve the crisis.

Ending subsidization of both aggressive Israeli tactics against the Palestinians and autocratic repression by "friendly" Arab governments toward their own citizens would also most likely reduce anti-U.S. terrorism significantly. Since statements by terrorists and public-opinion polls in the Islamic world indicate that their major gripe with the United States is her policies toward the Middle East, a more humble U.S. foreign policy toward that region would reduce the risk to Americans at home and abroad. And trading a reckless, general, military-centric War on Terror for quieter intelligence and law-enforcement activities targeted specifically against Al Qaeda likely would be more effective and generate less blowback terrorism that further endangers Americans.

If a change in U.S. policy caused Israel to reach a consensual settlement with the Palestinians, the Israelis would be more prosperous and secure. Also, getting rid of the "terrorism as war" paradigm and substituting a "terrorism as a crime" framework would be more effective and less dangerous for Israel.

Israel and the United States have similar security situations. Both countries are militarily dominant over all potential nation-state adversaries. The principal threat remaining to Israel and America is terrorism. Both countries have adopted similar aggressive, offensively oriented strategies that are likely, in the long term, to stir up more terrorism than they eradicate. Only by addressing the root causes of terrorism can the two countries hope to reduce it. Because other security threats have declined for both of these dominant powers, they now have the luxury to be able to address such causes and thus reduce blowback terrorist attacks.

Israel must negotiate a consensual settlement with the Palestinians that, in exchange for peace, gives up land for a viable and truly sovereign Palestinian state. To pressure Israel to undertake such an initiative and to reduce anti-U.S. blowback, the United States should end military, economic, and diplomatic support for both Israel and autocratic Arab states. Taking a more neutral and hands-off U.S. approach to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute would remove the barriers that currently insulate both parties from pressures to settle the crisis. Only when both sides are exhausted by the conflict and ready to make peace should the United States mediate a settlement from a strictly neutral position. ◦c



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# The Christian Zionist Threat to Peace

## Spend Your Vacation Fighting for Israel

**by Aaron D. Wolf**

In assessing the political conditions necessary to establish a lasting peace in Israel-Palestine, Americans are confronted with a theological question: Does the Bible insist that Christians take a certain view regarding the treatment of the Jewish people in particular, their presence in the Holy Land, or the placement of the borders of Israel?

One particular subset of American Christianity answers that question in the affirmative. Yes, they believe, the Bible does mandate that we treat the Jews—specifically, the Jews of Israel—not merely as another ethnic group of fallen (sinful) people, made in the image of God and in need of the Gospel, but as one that holds God's unique favor and is deserving of our full, unconditional support. This subset is made up largely of American evangelicals who are committed to something called *dispensationalism*. "The essence of Dispensationalism," according to Charles Ryrie, a dispensationalist theologian, "Is the distinction between Israel and the Church. This grows out of [our] consistent employment of normal or plain interpretation, and it reflects an understanding of the basic purpose of God in all His dealings with mankind as that of glorifying Himself through salvation and other purposes as well."

The fruits of this "normal or plain interpretation" of the Bible have raised any number of red flags for conservative theologians of all Christian denominations. Of greater concern to us here, however, is the way in which many popular and powerful dispensationalist leaders apply their apocalyptic understanding of the place of the modern state of Israel on the stage of world history—the "other purposes" by which God must be glorified—in the form of "Christian Zionism."

When President Bush, himself an evangelical, proposed statehood for Palestine in his 2002 "Road Map," several key evangelical leaders denounced the plan, hinting that they would withdraw support for him if he failed to reconsider. According to their Christian Zionist understanding of dispensationalism, there simply cannot be a Palestinian state, because God has promised all of Eretz Israel to the Jews—forever. The borders of the state of Israel must extend, literally, to biblical proportions, including all of the land that is now in dispute—the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights, and all of Jerusalem—and we must do everything in our power to make it so.

Addressing this way of thinking is essential to the success of any peace plan for the Middle East that involves the United States, because the sheer size of the umbrella group that we call *evangelical*—there are an estimated 65 million evangelicals in the United States—means that, in a democracy, their deeply held beliefs matter. (President Bush won the White House in November 2004 with fewer than 61 million votes.) Although, obviously, all 65 million evangelicals are not militant Christian Zionists, many are beholden to leaders who are unflinching supporters of the state of Israel and actively hostile toward the Palestinians. Paul Charles Merkley, author of *Christian Attitudes Towards the State of Israel*, conservatively estimates that Christian Zionists number in the "tens of millions."

The greatest source of Christian Zionist influence is found in the Christian media. Evangelical Christians are fed a steady diet of dispensationalist/Zionist interpretations of the news every day through the radio and television programs of Pat Robertson (*CBN News*, *The 700 Club*); Jerry Falwell (the Liberty Channel, which broadcasts, among other things, *Zola Levitt Presents*); John Hagee; Benny Hinn (*This Is Your Day!*); Kerby Anderson (*Point of View*); Jack Van Impe (*Jack Van Impe Presents*); and countless others, with audiences in the millions. Megachurches, which are virtual media centers, hold prophecy conferences all across America and invite rabbis to come and speak to Christians on Israeli history and politics. Perhaps most influential have been the best-selling books of the *Left Behind* series, by Timothy LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins. The 12-book series, offering a fictional account of the playing-out of dispensationalist interpretations of biblical prophecy, has enjoyed sales of over 62 million units, eclipsing Hal Lindsey's dispensationalist fantasy novel, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, the best-selling book of the 1970's.

The net effect of this constant barrage of media attention focused on Israel as the center of God's plan for the world is that Christians who may not be experts on the "70th Week of Daniel" or the "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" are nonetheless prone to accept any negative interpretation of the Palestinians and are favorable toward the fulminations of politicians and journalists who reject any right of return for Palestinians and the very idea of Palestinian statehood. It means that the neoconservatives and members of Likud who are eager to increase their own power and sphere of influence can easily find an audience willing to listen and organize at the grassroots level in support of their candidacies and policies. And it means that Israel-first politicians, Jewish resettlement groups (which bring tens of thousands of Jews from around the world to populate settlements in such hot zones as the West Bank), and far-right Israeli Zionist groups have an American cash cow eager to fund their efforts—efforts that war against any final-status settlement for peace.

Evangelicals are encouraged to lavish money on various pro-Israel groups, such as John Hagee's Exodus II, which has given over $3.7 million to finance the immigration of over 6,000 Russian Jews to Israel; or Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein's HaKeren Leyedidut, which has raised $100 million over the past eight years; or Pat Robertson's Bless Israel, in which Christians are asked to "show your support for Israel by blessing their [*sic*] economy." In addition, they are prodded to attend such spectacles as the Christian Coalition's "Christian Solidarity for Israel Rally" in

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Washington (2002) to hear speeches by Dick Armey, J.C. Watts, Tom DeLay, and Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert and to sign pledges of total support for Ariel Sharon and his use of whatever means are necessary to defeat "terrorists."

Oftentimes, more moderate, mainstream evangelical groups give money and support to more radical Christian Zionist efforts. One group that enjoys the support of the Christian Coalition is the Battalion of Deborah, which conducted its "2005 Solidarity With Israel Tour" from February 20 to March 3. On February 23 to 24, paying guests enjoyed being "assigned to work at one of the Barak Brigade army bases." According to the promotional literature,

> The Barak Brigade is a tank unit in the Golan that serves along the Syrian border. Each participant will be issued an army uniform and assigned to work as a volunteer in tasks ranging from painting to oiling equipment and other important things in between . . . but most of all loving and encouraging the young soldiers defending Israel.

Christian Zionist leaders are not shy about using a little muscle when it comes to playing hardball politics and have sometimes interfered in the peace process. In January 1998, for example, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu embarked on a diplomatic mission to the United States to visit President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. The Clinton administration intended to press Netanyahu to pursue a "credible withdrawal" of Israeli Defense Forces from the West Bank, to offer the Palestinian Authority some degree of limited autonomy, and to make greater efforts to comply with the Oslo accords. After Netanyahu's initial meeting with Albright, despite her statement to the media that the meeting went "extremely well," it was clear that Netanyahu would not budge on any of these issues. Yet President Clinton's frustration turned to outrage when, before meeting with him, Netanyahu attended a rally in Washington on Monday, January 19, of the Christian Zionist group Voices United for Israel, then held a private meeting with Jerry Falwell, Morris Chapman and Richard Lee (of the Southern Baptist Convention), and John Hagee (a San Antonio megachurch pastor). The purpose of both the rally and the closed-door meeting was, according to a *New York Times* report, to encourage Netanyahu to "oppose steps to give up any more land to the Palestinians." Falwell (who was, at the time, disseminating a video implicating President Clinton in the death of Vince Foster) made it clear to the prime minister that he could mobilize a substantial Republican voting bloc, the Christian Zionists, to counter any political fallout that might occur as a result of Netanyahu's refusal to negotiate. "There are about 200,000 evangelical pastors in America," said Falwell, "and we're asking them all through e-mail, faxes, letters, telephone, to go into their pulpits and use their influence in support of the state of Israel and the prime minister." The rally, cosponsored by Pat Robertson's and Ralph Reed's Christian Coalition and the National Religious Broadcasters, circumvented the peace process and sent a clear message to American evangelicals that only "liberals" (such as Bill Clinton) think that Israel should make land concessions in the quest for peace. Adding to this, President Clinton, after concluding his failed talks with Netanyahu, went on *The Newshour With Jim Lehrer* that very evening, as the Monica Lewinsky scandal was breaking, to deny that "there is a sexual relationship" and to describe his time with Netanyahu as "difficult."

The Republican Party, so heavily influenced by the neoconservatives, is happy to cultivate the dispensationalist evangelicals, both through promises of promoting their "moral values" and through tough talk about "terrorists"—where *terrorist* is often a synonym for *Palestinian*. A strange and perverse symbiosis exists between many politicians, who promise the moon to evangelicals, and popular evangelical leaders, who are so eager for access to the corridors of power that they are willing to compromise again and again on those "moral values" issues ("gay marriage," abortion, euthanasia) in order to stay in the loop.

America's evangelicals are, by and large, sincere in their commitment to what they believe the Bible teaches and think that those who deny their interpretation of Israel's place in the world and the land to which she is entitled are simply theological liberals who do not take the Bible seriously. In these troubled times, the last thing that Christians need to do is to stop taking the Bible seriously. However, in the absence of historic Christian teachings on the Last Days and biblical prophecy (so rarely confessed and taught by the traditional Christian denominations in America—Lutheran, Episcopalian, Roman Catholic, *etc.*), these Christians have come to believe that there is but one "literal" interpretation of the Bible when it comes to the land of Israel.

Some conservative evangelical intellectuals are bristling at the embarrassment that the efforts of the Christian Zionists provide them, opting for "progressive dispensationalism," which seeks to tone down the extreme obsession with Israel that characterizes Christian Zionism. Others are going a step further and renouncing dispensationalism altogether—while retaining a commitment to what is now called "historic premillennialism." Historic premillennialists do not radically divide Israel and the Church but emphasize continuity between the two Testaments, Old and New. Still others are embracing "covenant theology," a modern incarnation of the historic Christian eschatology embraced by some American Calvinists. Progressive dispensationalists, historic premillennialists, and covenant theologians engage in friendly debate and dialogue, reflecting their more balanced and academic approach to questions of biblical eschatology. This dialogue, however, seems to occur primarily among theologians and pastors and has not yet trickled down to the evangelical laity, who remain under the powerful influence of the Christian media.

If we are to remove the obstacle of Christian Zionism, we must encourage and support the efforts of those evangelical theologians who are earnestly seeking to reform evangelical eschatology in favor of a view that both takes the Bible seriously and places emphasis on the crucified and risen Christ (Who will, indeed, come again), not on the state of Israel. Furthermore, we must make every effort to expose the relationships among the Likud, the neoconservatives, and the Christian Zionist leadership and the cynical ways in which they seek to manipulate faithful evangelicals into supporting their secularist goals—goals that have nothing to do with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, from which evangelicals derive their name. Evangelicals must be brought to the conclusion that it is through the Church and the Gospel, not through the Republican Party, that God's purposes on earth are furthered. Today, with Christian Zionism exerting so significant an influence on 65 million Americans—and on politics and foreign affairs—such efforts are essential if we are to see a lasting peace in Israel-Palestine, something all Christians of good will should desire. c



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# The Impact of Islam on the Arab-Israeli Dispute

## Of Myths and *Waqfs*

**by Srdja Trifkovic**

The role of Islam in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is a contentious subject with two main schools of thought. One, broadly sympathetic to the Palestinian point of view, treats the conflict in geopolitical and social, rather than ideological or religious, terms. The other, emanating mostly (although not exclusively) from pro-Israeli sources, maintains that the Palestinian cause—even when wrapped in secularist discourse—remains inseparable from the Muslim mind-set and Islamic political tradition.

The first view concedes that some Palestinians have embraced Islamic extremism but maintains that the underlying causes motivating them are to be found in their nationalist and social grievances that are understandable and more or less legitimate. If those grievances were to be addressed and rectified, the theory goes, the jihadist zeal in the West Bank and Gaza would also abate. The proponents of this view additionally warn that Israel—having presented herself during the Cold War as a bulwark against the spread of communism through the Middle East—is now projecting herself as the West's first line of defense against militant Islam, while facilitating its spread by her intransigent policies in a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The second view warns that, even if an evenhanded and generous agreement were to be offered to the Arabs, it would prove to be unworkable in the long term because the notion of Israel's legitimacy is simply unacceptable to traditional Islam. This view holds that nominally secular Arab leaders, such as the late Yasser Arafat, look upon agreements with the Israelis and other non-Muslims in a manner identical to the way their Islamist compatriots view such agreements: as a ruse known under its Arab name of *Hudaybiyya*. It was developed by Muhammad as a temporary ploy to deceive the infidel until the Muslim side is strong enough to destroy him. In this view, a permanent settlement is impossible because over 95 percent of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza are Muslim and therefore subscribe to the view that any compromise legitimizing Israel is not only treasonous but sacrilegious.

Both views are correct, although neither is wholly right. In a place called the "Holy Land," religion has never been a wholly private affair, separable from political, cultural, and ethnic motives and sensibilities. This is more apparent today than it was a generation ago. A conflict that may have been amenable, a few decades ago, to conventional conflict resolution has morphed into a civilizational and religious dispute beyond politics.

In classical Islam, separation between religion and politics does not exist. Even the term "political Islam" is oxymoronic, because Islam is not a "mere" religion; it is a self-contained worldview and a way of life that claims the primary allegiance of all those who call themselves Muslim. To whatever political entity a Muslim believer may belong, he belongs morally, spiritually, intellectually—in principle, totally—to the World of Belief of which Muhammad is the prophet and Mecca is the capital. This is not, of course, true for every Muslim, but it is true of every *true* Muslim.

The basis of the social and legal order and obligation in Islam is the Koran, the final revelation of Allah's will, which is to be obeyed by all creation. His divine sovereignty is irreconcilable with popular sovereignty, the keystone of democracy. Islamic law, *sharia*, is not an addition to the secular legal code with which it coexists; it is the only *true* code, the only basis of obligation. To be legitimate, all political power therefore must rest exclusively with those who enjoy Allah's authority on the basis of his revealed will. Politics is not "part of Islam," as this would imply that, in origin, it is a distinctly separate sphere of existence that is then eventually amalgamated with Islam.

The Muslim world functioned on that basis for over a millennium. Then came the decline of Islam's political and economic power *vis-à-vis* the West. Culminating with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, it prompted the emerging elites in the Arab-speaking world to define the quest for national and cultural identity and political power in terms of nationalism with distinctly secular, Western-inspired overtones. *Arabism* rather than Islam became the dominant discourse, displacing the traditional vocabulary of political affiliation and action.

After World War II, and especially with the establishment of the state of Israel, pan-Arabism went beyond promoting a sense of shared history, culture, and language and called for the creation of a single Arab state. The conservative, religious masses could also identify with pan-Arab nationalism, however, because it retained much of the Islamic semantic legacy. The term *umma*, denoting the universal community of the faithful, was modified to refer to the Arab nation (*al-umma al-'arabiyya*). Before 1967, Arab nationalism had tended to be secular, socialist, and anti-Western. In that spirit, it was anti-Israeli: Israel was seen as a Western colony settled by Europeans and Americans in an Arab land, created both as a strategic outpost of the West and as a means of disposing of the Jews.

Until roughly 1990, those broader Arab trends also applied to the Palestinian political and intellectual mainstream. The opposition to Israel depended for support on pan-Arab sentiment abroad and the promotion of a nondenominational "Palestinian" identity at home. That identity was rooted in the myth of an idealized pre-1947 polity, and it amounted to a belated attempt to build a nation without a state and without much of the claimed land. The Fatah, the PLO, and its more radical rivals, led by such people as Abu Nidal (Black September) and Ahmed Jabril (PFLP-General Command), were invariably

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*Foreign-affairs editor Srdja Trifkovic is the author of* The Sword of the Prophet: Islam—History, Theology, Impact on the World.



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secularist and imbued with various shades of Marxism.

For over two decades following Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, violence in the occupied territories was largely devoid of a religious component. The state of Israel appeared, at times, to rely on conservative imams and the traditionalist-minded majority of observant Muslims to keep the common nationalist-secularist foe (Nasserism, Baathism) at bay. Until roughly 1990, both Israel and the United States saw Islamism as a counterweight to the Arab nationalism-*cum*-socialism supported by Eastern European communism.

The great realignment came with the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the absence of the failed secular god, young Arabs turned to Allah in droves. The fall of the Berlin Wall was soon followed by the defeat of militant Islamists in Algeria and Egypt, forcing them to shift their focus from the internal to the external front. Until that time, they regarded the secular regimes, such as that of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, as far more pernicious than the external enemy, Israel and the United States included. The dominant line at that time was that Islamic unity must come first, after which the liberation of Palestine would be easy to achieve. Their defeats in the 1990's led the Islamists to reverse the equation. The shift of their enmity from domestic Arab regimes to the United States and to Israel was a shrewd move necessitated by political reality.

Its early manifestation was the first major confrontation between Jews and Arabs in modern times that was explicitly religious. It took place on October 8, 1990, as the Soviet Union was disintegrating. A riot broke out on the Temple Mount as Palestinians rained stones down upon Jews at the Western Wall, claiming that a Jewish extremist group was attempting to lay the cornerstone for the Third Temple at the Al Aqsa mosque (the Dome of the Rock). Israeli police killed 21 Palestinians and wounded a hundred. Riots spread throughout the occupied territories, which was nothing new; the rioters were heard shouting *Allahu akbar*, which *was* a novelty.

Within a few years, Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement), the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah would become household names. They reversed the old formula of "Islamic unity first, Palestine next" and adopted the view that, far from the unity of the *umma* being a precondition for the liberation of Palestine, its liberation by the Islamic movement was the key to the unification of all Muslims. Hamas, in particular, has developed a substantial power base and an infrastructure that covers religious, charitable, political, and terrorist activities. To the youth, its activists offer divinely condoned martyrdom. To their parents, they offer some relief from grinding poverty. To all, they provide a stark contrast to the corrupt Palestinian Authority. Leftist secularist groups still enjoy some support among the educated over-40's, but their influence is diminishing. Their support among the young—half of the population—is negligible.

The founder and leader of Hamas, the late Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, blended the nationalist slogans of the secularists' pre-1990's struggle against Israel with principles derived from the doctrines and values of Islam. In line with Islamic teaching, when the infidels usurp a Muslim land, *jihad* becomes compulsory for a Muslim. According to the Hamas Charter, the land of Palestine is an Islamic *Waqf* consecrated for future Muslim generations until Judgment Day: "It, or any part of it, should not be squandered; it, or any part of it, should not be given up. There is no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad. Initiatives, proposals and international conferences are all a waste of time and vain endeavors."

From the orthodox Muslim point of view, there is nothing remarkable about this position. It is derived from the Koran, from the political tradition and social outlook of 13 centuries harking back to Muhammad. Relinquishing any part of Palestine at the negotiating table is a disobedient act of blasphemy against Allah, and the alternative is the only right way (*al-hal-wahid*). As a modern Muslim commentator points out, "Such an outlook renders struggle a religious duty, not a nationalist or patriotic one." The struggle against Israel is more than a "war of national liberation": It is *an act of worship* for which God rewards a struggler in the form of victory in this life and eternity in the hereafter. Hamas and other Islamic groups have brought a qualitative change to the Middle Eastern discourse: From their point of view, no permanent peace is possible because it would be against Allah's will to grant any piece of land once controlled by the faithful to non-Muslims.

A mirror image of this view is the claim—embraced by many American evangelicals, as my colleague Aaron Wolf explains—that the modern state of Israel is the embodiment of a biblical covenant: in other words, a *Waqf* under another name. Secular Israelis, including the country's founders, have utilized such claims when they have suited their purposes.

The effect of the alliance of religion and nationalism on the Arab-Israeli dispute is detrimental to the quest for lasting solutions. On the Palestinian side, it creates an unstable duality of approach, with compromise allowed as a short-term expedient but total victory seen as the only divinely ordained and, therefore, legitimate long-term outcome. Politicians may talk of diplomacy, but the society is deeply influenced by those who invoke Islam to deny the possibility of peace.

The conflict in the Middle East is neither incomprehensible outside its own terms of reference nor unique, but it appears so because religiously informed "narratives" are invoked to support the parties' claims more strongly and more explicitly than anywhere else in the world. The Arab-Israeli conflict disproves the Western elite class's dictum that religion is a declining influence in human affairs and a distraction from the business of politics.

U.S. foreign policy has neglected the impact of religion on the policies and behavior of both parties to the Arab-Israeli dispute. It should treat metaphysical rationalizations of territorial or political claims by all parties with polite respect, but American policymakers must not co-opt or internalize any of those claims as a relevant factor in America's own security calculation. In particular, Washington must not treat such claims as acceptable alibis for nonnegotiable positions.

We need to be aware of the historical record of political Islam and to harbor no illusions about its ultimate ambitions today. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was on to something real when he declared, in December 1992, that his country's "struggle against murderous Islamic terror is also meant to awaken the world, which is lying in slumber." We should be no less aware that, in Israel's case, a common problem of global *jihad* is used as a cover for policies that facilitate its growth.

The American interest demands the destruction of global *jihad* in all its forms and the continued existence of the state of Israel, but both of these are based on geopolitical rather than emotional, moral, or scriptural grounds. Among reasonable people of good will, the concept of "land for peace" is still fundamentally valid. It needs to be rethought in Washington more fairly and evenhandedly than before.



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# Peace in the Promised Land

## A Realist Scenario

**by Scott P. Richert**

Almost three years have passed since the unseasonably warm day in June 2002 when a number of the authors who have contributed to this issue of *Chronicles* met near O'Hare Airport to sketch out one of the most ambitious projects that we at The Rockford Institute have ever undertaken. We approached the project with a sense of humility and a certain trepidation, not only because the conflict over Israel and Palestine was older than almost anyone in the room (and almost equally stubborn) but because we knew that many others, from think tanks on up to the United Nations, had attempted to address this issue—and failed. And with each passing failure, the problem has grown more intractable. More importantly from the standpoint of the American interest, the political divide on this issue in the United States has grown ever wider.

Nine months after the shocking events of September 11, that divide was more like a chasm. Both the Bush administration and the Likud government had made it clear that, in the new War on Terror, Jerusalem was Washington's firmest ally. The equation of rock-throwing Palestinian teenagers with Muhammad Atta and his fellow hijackers was so common as to be trite. It was clear that merely offering another road map for peace would doom this project to failure.

Yet we knew that we could bring something to the discussion that others could not. The guiding principle of The Rockford Institute and *Chronicles* has always been that there are no political solutions to cultural problems. And the conflict in the Holy Land, like the broader one with resurgent Islam, is more cultural than political. Through rounds of peace talks, wars, uprisings, suicide bombings, expansionist settlements, foreign aid, and U.N. resolutions, that simple recognition has been lost.

And so, from the very beginning, the focus of this project has not been to draw up new maps of a partitioned Jerusalem or devise elaborate compensations schemes for dispossessed Palestinians. Instead, we set about assimilating and presenting in an approachable way the information necessary to understand, and to make informed judgments about, one of the most complex cultural struggles of the past century, one which reaches all the way back (in certain aspects) to the seventh century A.D.

The articles in this issue represent only a few thousand words from *Peace in the Promised Land: A Realist Scenario*, the more than 300-page book that is the final culmination of this effort. (The book, which will be available in about six weeks, can be pre-ordered now; please see the advertisement on page 32.) The structure of the book mirrors the goals that we established for this project. Part One, "History," begins with a more in-depth version of Thomas Fleming's *Perspective*, "From Abraham to Napoleon: 4,000 Years of Ethnic Conflict." Dr. Fleming sets the stage by sketching out the history of both Jews and Arabs in the Holy Land, separating fact from nationalist fictions: "Ethnic and religious conflicts almost always can be illustrated as a conflict of historical myths that are invoked to justify current acts of aggression."

In "Palestine: From Napoleon to Israel's Independence," Cambridge historian Michael Stenton takes up where Dr. Fleming leaves off. Looking especially at the role Great Britain has played in the region, Dr. Stenton provides a sober assessment of what happens when Western national interests—and, more importantly, imperial ambitions—run up against the historical myths that Dr. Fleming examined.

Dr. Stenton also provides a succinct history of modern Zionism. He takes pains to explain that Zionism does not necessarily flow from the Jewish religion; in fact, "In its 20th-century form, Zionism was not religion: It was an ideal for secularized or heterodox Jews who responded to religion more as history and national literature than as the observance of rabbinical law." More importantly, Zionism was a response to the increasingly uncertain position of the Jewish minority in Western Europe and the United States, as the Western nation-state reached its height in the 19th and early 20th centuries:

> If Zionism as a dream of renewal was a response to secularization, Zionism as ideology was a response to the threat of assimilation. Only in Israel, behind the secure wall of an imagined Jewish majority and the projected revival of the Hebrew language, could Jewish communities resist the remorseless assimilation that threatened to become their fate everywhere else. . . . Nationalism came late to the Jews, but it came with a Polish intensity.

Dr. Stenton ends his chapter with the observation that "Those who . . . arranged the 1948 war can still end it. The great powers of 1918 and 1948 are still with us." This leads to the second section of the book, "The Players," which examines the major national and ethnic forces at work in the conflict. The section begins with a chapter-length version of Dr. Leon Hadar's article from this issue, "Israel's Future: A New Israel in an Old Middle East?" Dr. Hadar, a research fellow in foreign-policy studies at the Cato Institute and a former bureau chief for the *Jerusalem Post*, details two visions of Israel's future: one represented by a more secular and Western Tel Aviv; the other, by a more "messianic and extremist" Jerusalem. He argues that most Israelis prefer the model of Tel Aviv and desire a negotiated settlement with the Palestinians while warning that American neoconservatives—particularly those within the Bush administration—have given new life to the vision of Jerusalem.

Dr. Srdja Trifkovic, author of the best-selling *Sword of the Prophet—Islam: History, Theology, Impact on the World*, provides an extended version of his article from this issue, "The Im-

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*Scott P. Richert is the executive editor of* Chronicles.



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pact of Islam on the Arab-Israeli Dispute." Of particular interest is his discussion of the relationship between Muslims and Jews from the time of Muhammad on. The often-overlooked Christian minority in the Holy Land, which has been both persecuted and courted by Muslims and Jews, is, as Dr. Trifkovic points out, in danger of extinction. "At the outset of the Islamic conquests under Muhammad's successors, the Holy Land was 100-percent Christian. . . . At the current rate of decline, by the year 2020, there will be no living Church in the land of Christ."

The plight of Middle Eastern Christians is considered also by Aaron D. Wolf in his chapter, "'Christian Zionism': An Obstacle to Peace." While evangelicals in the United States have backed ultranationalists in Israel, going so far as to disrupt the Clinton administration's attempts at brokering a peace deal, they have "also turned a blind eye toward their own brothers in the Faith: the Palestinian Christians. . . . Strangely, the Christian Zionist interpretation of the Bible causes them to favor the survival of the Jews over that of these fellow Christians." Since the final years of the Carter administration, these Christian Zionists have had enormous impact on U.S. policy in the Middle East, and, under Presidents Reagan and George W. Bush, they have allied themselves with prominent neoconservatives whose vision of morality could not be farther from their own.

It is to those neoconservatives that Dr. Paul Gottfried turns in the next chapter, "Zionism and Neoconservatism." Commenting on the almost uncritical support of prominent neoconservatives for Israeli policies, Dr. Gottfried writes, "The only time in memory that neoconservatives have scolded Israel is when her left-of-center governments abandoned what they consider a sufficiently hard line in dealing with the Palestinians." While he has some sympathy for the role that ethnic identity plays in neoconservative support for Israel, he argues that "Jewish nationalism and certain perceptions about Israeli interests are essential to neoconservatism but do not exhaust a definition of what it is." He points out that, outside of the Middle East, neoconservatives have often supported Muslim insurgents against Western governments (for instance, in Chechnya, against the Russians), in the name of extending democracy globally.

Wayne Allensworth, a specialist in Russian affairs and a former analyst for the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, picks up that theme in "Interests and Ideology in Middle East Policy: How Russia, Europe, and China View the Middle East." While the United States may be the "last remaining superpower," Allensworth demonstrates that other countries are willing to share some of the burden that we have assumed in the Middle East. China, Russia, and several European states have been forced to balance their conflicts with Islamic insurgents with their need for Middle Eastern oil. By allowing these countries to take a more active role in the Middle East, Washington could help potential allies in the War on Terror while securing U.S. interests in the region. Allensworth urges Washington to "share the great-power burden," arguing that "Such a reassessment and realignment would mean jettisoning messianic views, the rhetoric that encourages them, and the present tendency to disregard international opinion, all of which breed anti-U.S. hostility and could conceivably foster the development of anti-U.S. alliances among the great powers."

Part Three, "Problems, Policies, Solutions," leads off with a chapter by David A. Hartman, chairman of the board of directors of The Rockford Institute and the driving force behind the project. In "Essentials for a Lasting Peace," Mr. Hartman, the retired chairman and CEO of Hartland Bank, outlines certain points that should be nonnegotiable, even though they are constantly revisited in the "peace process." These include the undeniable fact that "a lasting peace is not possible unless each party accepts the right of the other to exist"; that "peace will depend on the clear separation of the hostile parties into sovereign states with mutually acceptable permanent borders"; a resolution to the problem of Palestinian refugees; agreement on the status of Jerusalem; the establishment of civil rights and citizenship for Palestinian minorities in Israel and Jewish minorities in the new Palestinian state; equitable sharing of water resources in the region; and, finally, an acknowledgment that foreign interference in the region "no longer serves the best interests of either party." It is clear that "No peaceful resolution is possible without secure and respected borders, along with restitution for, and resettlement of, Palestinian refugees." But, as Mr. Hartman concludes, "it is unlikely that extreme Israeli nationalists will be willing to make concessions so long as the United States continues to finance new settlements, outposts, and defenses . . . In a very real sense, the government of the United States is a major contributor to the perpetuation of the conflict."

This conclusion is echoed by Doug Bandow, a former special assistant to President Reagan and a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, in "The U.S.-Israel Relationship: American Policy Goals and Interest Groups" (an expanded version of his article in this issue). With the end of the Cold War, Mr. Bandow argues, any major American interest in the region came to an end. Perpetuating the conflict only endangers Americans by increasing tensions between the United States and the Arab world.

In "The Law and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," Stephen B. Presser, *Chronicles*' legal-affairs editor and the Raoul Berger Professor of Legal History at Northwestern University, discusses the relevant parts of international law that pertain to the conflict and provides a detailed examination of the U.N. resolutions that underlie the peace process and of the various American proposals for a lasting solution, including President Bush's "Road Map." While the Road Map seems dead in the water, Dr. Presser still sees signs of hope and a role for the White House: "If the United States is serious about spreading democracy in the Middle East, the Palestinian territories would be a more auspicious place to start than Iraq: There is a longer tradition of fairly open debate, and Palestinian politics is not dominated by ethnic divisions."

The final chapter, "Israel and the United States: Leading Parallel Lives, Making Similar Mistakes" is an expanded version of the article in this issue by Ivan Eland, the director of the Center on Peace and Liberty at the Independent Institute and a former principal defense analyst for the Congressional Budget Office. Picking up Doug Bandow's theme, Dr. Eland explains how American disengagement from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would benefit both Israel and the United States and would allow America to pursue the War on Terror more effectively.

*Peace in the Promised Land* will also feature several color maps of the region, a timetable covering the last 30 years of the conflict, the text of the Geneva Accords, and a select bibliography that goes well beyond the normal policy studies and news reports to provide the inquisitive reader with a more complete picture of the cultural roots of this conflict. For those who truly want to see this conflict resolved in a way that serves the American interest, *Peace in the Promised Land: A Realist Scenario* is required reading.



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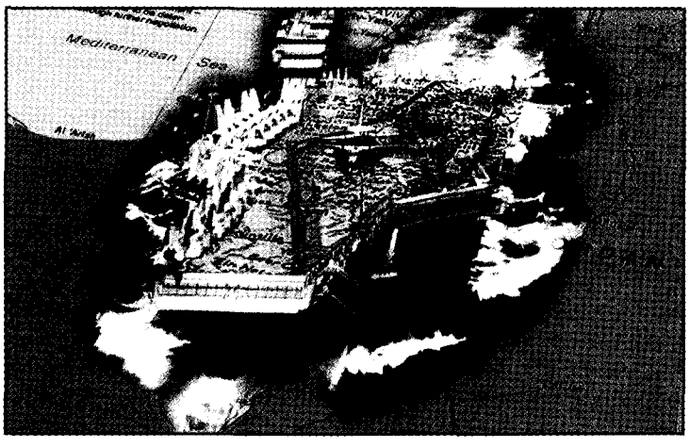
**The purpose of this book is to rekindle debate in the United States about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. . . . It is not normal that the discourse on the dispute is far more dynamic, varied, and intelligent in other countries—including Israel—than in America.**

**—From the "Foreword"**

# *Peace in the Promised Land: A Realist Scenario*

## edited by Srdja Trifkovic

featuring chapters by Middle Eastern experts, *Chronicles* editors, and scholars
Thomas Fleming, Michael Stenton, Leon Hadar, Srdja Trifkovic, Aaron D. Wolf, Paul Gottfried, Wayne Allensworth, David A. Hartman, Doug Bandow, Stephen B. Presser, and Ivan Eland, as well as color maps, source documents, and a selected bibliography




Few issues in American foreign policy evoke more emotion than U. S support for Israel. With the death of Yasser Arafat and a new centrist coalition in Israel, however, it is time to reconsider the question, "What is the American interest in this conflict?"

*Peace in the Promised Land* is essential reading for anyone who wants to move beyond sound bites and policy proposals to understand the roots of the conflict—and the role that the United States can play in its resolution.

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# The Lavender Baboon

by James O. Tate

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—Walt Whitman

**The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln**
*by C.A. Tripp*
*New York: Free Press; 343 pp., $27.00*

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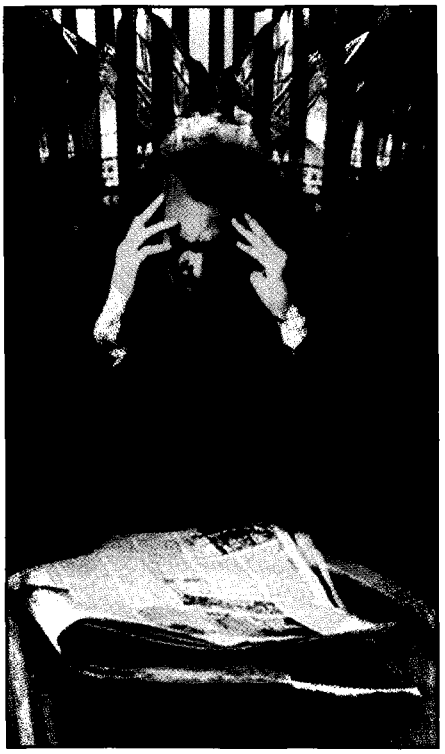

I first heard about "brain freeze" from an amiable fellow who was vending Italian ices. He pointed out that, if the ices were not consumed carefully, the freeze would penetrate the palate into the brain. In fact, I did experience brain freeze that way. But since that unpleasant episode, I have discovered another form of brain freeze, one caused by the act of reading rather than by the consumption of Italian ices. One such painful case was provoked by an op-ed piece in *Newsday* (December 1, 2004), in which the former chief judge of the New York Court of Appeals, Sol Wachtler, weighed in to correct some remarks by President George W. Bush. The President had declared that he would not nominate anyone to the Supreme Court who would have condoned the *Dred Scott* decision of 1857. He said that Chief Justice Roger B. Taney's decision was "a personal opinion. That's not what the Constitution says. . . . And so I would pick people that would be strict constructionists."

The former Judge Wachtler was right to make the point that, far from being a personal opinion, Taney's decision was against his own instinctive convictions and was rather an affirmation of the meaning of the Constitution as it had been approved. In other words, Taney *was* a strict constructionist, and Bush had reversed the facts. But the former judge went on to declare that the Constitution should be interpreted as a "living document," and that the *Dred Scott* case was "an unmitigated disaster for the country, the Supreme Court, and, worst of all, for African-Americans." The former judge does not seem to have considered that the Civil War was also an unmitigated disaster, and that it was largely caused by those who rejected the law in favor of a "higher law" that is ineffably indefinable. Though I could not be surprised that educated Americans cannot interpret their own history or that professors of law cannot see the consequences of the abandonment of precedent and principle, brain freeze was nevertheless advancing.

The icy headlock was upon me—there were so many layers of the Big Chill! Let's see, now. Taney's legally correct interpretation of the law was a disaster because it did not endorse the politically correct Transcendentalist vision of the radical abolitionists, and his interpretation led to the Civil War, which corrected Taney's correctness at a cost of over 620,000 dead. Bush says, nearly a century and a half later, that Taney projected his personal opinion on the law, which is the reverse of the truth, as noted by Wachtler, who, though he grasps the facts, can't handle them. Add to this that Judge Wachtler, most unfairly, is now the former judge Wachtler because of his own law breaking, threats to his former mistress (the beauteous Joy Silverman, over whose trust fund he had a fiduciary responsibility), mixing prescription drugs irresponsibly and illegally, and denying, as a sitting judge, his own mental illness. But even after the disgrace and the jail term and his book *After the Madness* (1997), there is still one thing that Sol Wachtler does not inspire, and that is the imputation of homosexuality.

Yes, there is a connection; today, homosexuality is a matter of civil rights and constitutional correctness, as we continue to obscure the manifest meaning of that troublesome, even baffling document. And I must add that today homosexuality is what we read about. Is there any other subject worthy of discussion? I had hardly recovered from one Big Chill when I ran into another brain freeze in extended form in the *New York Times* which made me wish I had the late Dr. Hunter S. Thompson—or, even better, the late Dr. Samuel T. Francis—to help me sort it all out. On February 12, 2005, the *Times* ran a front-page headline about a rare strain of H.I.V. that had been detected in a man in his mid-40's who had engaged in unprotected anal

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sex with hundreds of other men while under the influence of crystal methamphetamines. Interestingly enough, the man's name was not released "to protect his privacy," though some may have wondered how much privacy he had left to protect. The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene was most concerned, though mental hygiene was not apparently an issue at stake. The following day, the newspaper published a second front-page story, which, in turn, was followed by yet another. On Valentine's Day, an article on the same subject appeared on the front page of the *Metro* section, accompanied by related items on homosexual websites and chat rooms about the reaction of the queer community to the previous reports. One individual saw a conspiracy on the part of the *New York Times* to keep the public in fear of sex.

I was, of course, worried that the *Times* would drop the ball with the story. Of course, given the *Times*' staff and readership, I should have known that they wouldn't let me down. By February 16, Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, the head of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, was calling for more research and more privacy: "Confidentiality is a core and supremely important concept here." He rather scanted the mental hygiene aspect of drug-boosted sex marathons, I thought, while seeming a bit confused on the privacy issue. On February 18, the paper printed another scientific story about the rare mutation of the H.I.V. virus. Over the next three days, I may have missed some stories before, on February 21, I noted that Dr. Frieden had been attacked for "excessive haste" in sounding the alarm. In a brain-freezing moment, AIDS activists sensed an attempt to demonize the "gay" lifestyle and compared Dr. Frieden to Nancy Reagan. By February 25, the scientists had defended themselves against the charge of having gone public with their warning. On February 26, the *Times*' lead editorial was only obliquely related: an attack on the Bush administration's AIDS policies, particularly in regard to international needle-exchange programs. Since then, I haven't noted any further articles on the subject and can only presume that the sanctioned orgies continue while the mayor and others maintain a dialogue about homosexual "marriage."

A lifetime of lazy reading as an effective strategy to avoid work had come back to bite me. Even though there was nothing to read, I was still hooked. An atavistic thought dimly crept into my frozen cerebellum, whispering luridly, "How about a Civil War book, big boy! You always like those." I thought back bitterly to those moments in a long life when someone had addressed me as follows: "You're not doing anything. Put down that book, and come over here and help me with this stuff." But even this humiliation had not deterred me, years later, from still referring to reading as "studying" and "work" and usually getting away with it. I had to feed the monkey, but what I wanted to know was, how could I connect my interest in the Civil War with my newly addictive commitment to "gay" studies and queer theory, as acquired from the nation's newspaper of record?

And just at that tense moment, snap my thong if my problems weren't completely solved in one too-divinely unbelievable synthesis of advanced consciousness! C.A. Tripp's book on the homosexual threads in the Lincoln legend suited my every need, as I hope a fair description will demonstrate. First, we have to know at least something about the author, as biography explains much about the book. Dr. Tripp died in May 2003, just after finishing the first draft of *The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln*, which means that the book is something of an unfinished work. He might have made some changes and improved the work if he had lived, but the book itself suggests that he also might have made it worse. Even so, the text has been edited by Lewis Gannett. Furthermore, the book comes to us in a form that is distinctly offbeat, with a remarkable Introduction by Jean Baker of Goucher College, author of a biography of Mary Todd Lincoln, and an Afterword consisting of three responses: one historian's dissent, another's endorsement, and a psychologist's perspective. Such a structure of presentation suggests some anxiety on the part of the publishers, and, indeed, Philip Nobile, writing in the January 17, 2005, *Weekly Standard* has pointed to a history of problems with the project. Nobile had once been part of this project, had drafted parts of the manuscript, and uses such words as *hoax*, *fraud*, and *plagiarism* to describe the work as we have it. Nobile quotes a phone call from the AIDS activist and author Larry Kramer, who said, "If you don't stop making a stink about Tripp's book, I'm going to expose you as an enormous homophobe. . . . For the sake of humanity, please, gays need a role model." Kramer's involvement with the "gay"-Lincoln thesis has also been noted by Tripp himself, as have previous assertions (in 1971) by the homosexual liberationist James Kepner and by Prof. Charles Shively in his book on Whitman, *Drum Beats* (1989), published by the Gay Sunshine Press. So there can be no question that a homosexual agenda, rather than a biographical or historical one, played a significant part in the genesis of *The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln*.

We should add that C.A. Tripp was a disciple of Alfred Kinsey, a practicing psychologist, and the author in 1975 of the best-selling *Homosexual Matrix*. The ten years that he put in as a "sex researcher" working on the Lincoln project have resulted in what I can describe either as the worst nonfiction book I have ever read, or, alternatively, as the best book I have ever read about the homosexuality of Abraham Lincoln. The book isn't much, and the evidence is underwhelming, but the question remains open whether Lincoln may just possibly have engaged in homosexual practices—yet such thoughts do not really touch the heart of the matter that we have before us.

Thinking of the history and images of the war, I did say to myself as I began the book, "Zouaves!" The flamboyant uniforms that aped the Algerian style of the French army of the Crimean War were nothing if not swishy. And, sure enough, Tripp's Chapter Six is all about Col. Elmer Ellsworth and his Zouaves, and Lincoln's solicitation of the young officer and the extended grief that he later expressed for him. Of course, this proves nothing and only goes to show what damage a predetermined conclusion can do to historical investigation. It also occurred to me, however, that, in fictional—though not historical—discourse, there is an element of *déjà vu* in the proposition of a homosexual Lincoln. No one has remarked, as far as I know, that we have been here before, at least in the imagination of Ernest Hemingway. In perhaps the best chapter of his best novel, Chapter XII of *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), the narrator, Jacob Barnes, banters with Bill Gorton just before they begin to fish. Bill riffs on a Civil War fantasy that actually is related to the sexual chaos of the novel:

> Listen. You're a hell of a good guy, and I'm fonder of you than anybody on earth. I couldn't tell you that in New York. It'd mean I was



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a faggot. That was what the Civil War was about. Abraham Lincoln was a faggot. He was in love with General Grant. So was Jefferson Davis. Lincoln just freed the slaves on a bet. The Dred Scott case was framed by the Anti-Saloon League. Sex explains it all. The Colonel's Lady and Judy O'Grady are Lesbians under their skin.

The vision of Hemingway, responding to that of T.S. Eliot in *The Waste Land*, provides mythological perspectives for framing the sexual chaos, as through the myth of the wounded Fisher King. But we must add that Hemingway, like Herman Melville, Henry James, and Mark Twain, has also been the object of the queer-theory treatment, and that Abraham Lincoln has no special claim to an exemption.

Tripp's first chapter sketches Lincoln's friendship with Captain Derickson of Company K of the Pennsylvania Bucktails, with whom Lincoln sometimes slept when his wife was away from the White House. Lincoln's obvious emotional isolation may explain his affection for the captain better than Tripp's heavy-handed, reductionist, and unwarranted conclusions, and, since the hot stuff seems routine, the book is tripped up at the beginning. The second chapter argues without much evidence that Lincoln went through an early puberty and was therefore more likely to have been a homosexual than if he had come to pubescence later. Add to this that the young Lincoln wrote a smutty poem about a male/male marriage, and we sense that, somehow, a pattern is beginning to emerge. The third chapter about the early years continues on the same level of monomaniacal extrapolation of unremarkable data, mixed with an abstract thesis-grinding that clashes with the homely micro-history. By page 66, Tripp's work on Lincoln is essentially over, and what is bad gets worse.

The tedium becomes exquisite as Tripp trashes the Ann Rutledge myth in Chapter Four, finally referring to the legend of romance as "high camp"—surely a revealing mistake by the author, and one of many that escaped the editor. Tripp shows what can only be called homosexual indignation as he angrily rejects the tale of romance. Historically, he is right; emotionally, he is all wrong. No girls, please—and let's maintain the semblance of continuity into the fifth chapter about Mary Owens and Lincoln's unkind remarks about her, which are a form of "wit." The case of that attractive officer of alluring Zouaves, Elmer Ellsworth, we have already noted, so we are ready for a seventh chapter on the well-known case of Lincoln's long friendship with Joshua Speed of Kentucky. Disagreeing about politics, these two must have had a special bond indeed to hold them together in those contentious years, but what might be a wild surmise for some is certainty for the intrepid Tripp. The eighth chapter, on "Marriage and Mary Todd," is all too predictable, and the rage with which Tripp dismisses Lincoln's wife is the most disgraceful thing in the book—so indefensible, indeed, that Jean Baker, in her Introduction, calls it "misogyny."

But now we transcend the paranoid manipulation of decontextualized detail to paint with a broader brush. The ninth chapter, on "Lincoln, Sex, and Religion," begins with the following sentence: "Lincoln's honesty was such that he was never known to have lied or misrepresented himself about anything, yet even this is an understatement." The claim speaks for itself and must be received strictly as a statement of "gay" pride. Tripp's mystic exposition begins to swell into a rapturous anthem of celebration: Lincoln's most famous pronouncements and religious eccentricity are grounded in his sexuality, which redeemed our country. The incoherent tenth chapter defies comment, but not a quotation of the first sentence: "Lincoln led his entire life without a single known example of any violation of ethics." The concluding chapter, "On Lincoln's Sexuality, with Extensions," does not claim that Lincoln had sex with extensions but that Tripp has a right as expositor to inscribe an absurd digression about Alan Turing, the homosexual code breaker who aided British intelligence in World War II. Rife with logical fallacies, *The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln* is unconstrained by any concern for coherence.

Tripping on the light fantastic toe rather like a member of the Ballet Trockadero de Monte Carlo, the author may have yet, paradoxically enough, performed a service. Though he has not proved his case, he has shown something of Lincoln's essential weirdness; and this alone may cause an unvarnished reconsideration of Honest Abe. A review of the "august baboon's" most famous words is long overdue, as the stupefying drug mislabeled as "American history" prevents our access to what lies hidden in plain sight. The First Inaugural Address, besides being embarrassingly disingenuous, seeks union, or actually reunion, with slavery. The Emancipation Proclamation not only freed no slaves but played a card that is listed as a reason for the founding secession in the Declaration of Independence. The Gettysburg Address outrageously misreads that secessionist document, the Declaration of Independence, and ignores the Constitution, which did not forbid secession and provided for slavery. The Second Inaugural Address attributes to a mysterious God the willful deeds of men, as though the speaker had not been a blundering but a powerful actor in those chosen actions. "With malice toward none" does not exactly square with the butcher's bill and the burning buildings, and "With charity for all" rings a bit hollow, considering the rampant corruption; but with all the Wagnerian groundswell and pseudobiblical sanctimony, we may just need a moment to dab our eyes and wipe our noses with clean little handkerchiefs. The rhetorical and logical damage to the American mind that is the Lincolnian legacy may be a potent form of political hocus-pocus even today, as it is so often exploited, but that does not mean it wasn't flimflam then or isn't now. Compare, if you like, the late Sen. Everett Dirksen's rhapsodies about marigolds, and you have a demythologized example of the rhetorical bait-and-switch that was Lincoln's forte.

The late Dr. Tripp, apparently seeing Lincoln as a man with a difference because he was a homosexual, set out to claim a special political insight for homosexuals, because Lincoln was one. It is at least possible, however, that such an exploitative association is of as little credit to homosexuals as it is to Republicans, neoconservatives, or even Americans generally. Meanwhile, the fate of reading drives us, brain-frozen, back to the *New York Times* and perhaps a night with a Pennsylvania Bucktail. C

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# A Rumor of War

*by Wayne Allensworth*

**Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror**
*by "Anonymous" (Michael Scheuer)*
*Dulles, VA: Potomac Books;*
309 pp., $27.50

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George W. Bush's man at the CIA, Porter Goss, is now purging the agency, an act prompted by the persistence of certain parties in the CIA in presenting the White House with "reality-based analysis." Since such analysis presented a road block to war plans, Goss was ordered to rid the agency of "disloyal" employees, meaning a number of intelligence professionals who simply wanted to tell the truth. And the truth did not support the neoconservative plan for "World War IV"—a plan for invading and occupying a number of Middle Eastern states (beginning with Iraq), installing "democratic" (read: "pro-U.S.") governments, and otherwise making the world safe for Israel. Capturing or killing Osama bin Laden and destroying Al Qaeda were, in fact, never at the top of the neoconservative wish list.

The White House and Rumsfeld's Department of Defense found a way to get around "reality-based analysis" by creating their own "intelligence" operation, the so-called Office of Special Plans (OSP) at the Pentagon. The OSP reportedly hired scores of temporary "consultants"—including lawyers, congressional staffers, and policy analysts from pro-war Washington think tanks, few of whom possessed any intelligence experience—to sift through mountains of raw intelligence materials. The OSP did not participate in exchanges between representatives of the U.S. intelligence community and did not vet the unfiltered information it passed on to the White House. The OSP's own highly questionable information was in turn used in the White House/Department of Defense campaign to goad intelligence analysts into recommending military action.

The neocon hawks' amateur operation maintained ties to a similar unofficial group in Israel, which was reportedly charged with providing Prime Minister Ariel Sharon with more alarming assessments of Iraq than Tel Aviv's intelligence agencies were prepared to endorse. The Israel-OSP connection is not surprising: Both Rumsfeld's then undersecretary Douglas Feith and neoconservative hawk Richard Perle once served as advisors to former Likud Party boss Benjamin Netanyahu. Israelis were reportedly able to visit the OSP without being cleared through normal Pentagon channels.

With the United States bogged down in wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the neocons may now be targeting either Syria or Iran as the next object of "regime change," even as the White House continues its CIA shake-up and carries out a reshuffling of the intelligence community. Michael Scheuer, the author of two books on terrorism and Osama bin Laden (*Through Our Enemies' Eyes* and *Imperial Hubris*) became a CIA purge victim earlier this year. Scheuer, a 22-year agency veteran who once headed the task force assigned to track Bin Laden, apparently resigned under pressure; though he had been careful to report media contacts according to CIA ground rules, CNN reported that he had been threatened with "disciplinary action" by the new agency regime.

*Imperial Hubris*, Scheuer's latest book, was published anonymously (though the author's identity was revealed in media reports), after having been vetted for classified information before publication. It contains, among other things, what have become common arguments made by critics of the "War on Terror": that, under both the Clinton and the Bush administrations, senior officials made uninformed decisions that often undermined attempts to capture or kill Bin Laden, and that the war in Iraq is a diversion from the anti-Bin Laden effort—that it is, in fact, a gift to Osama bin Laden, boosting his image across the Islamic world as well as militant Islamic organizations' recruiting efforts, a fact confirmed, ironically, by Porter Goss himself in recent congressional testimony.

What is uncommon about Scheuer's book is its insider's view of an ignorant and hubristic elite leading America into disaster and defeat. Scheuer's voice is that of a hard-nosed realist, a patriot weary of bureaucratic newspeak, slick careerists, and wars fought and policies pursued for the interests of Beltway lobbyists and countries other than our own. The tone is harsh and unsparing; the criticism, relentless: Scheuer is a man on a mission. Having spent ten years as an intelligence analyst myself, I am only amazed that Mike Scheuer survived in the CIA bureaucracy, which he skewers in this book, as long as he did.

*Imperial Hubris* has three major focal points of criticism: the culture of the Washington bureaucracy and that of the political, intelligence, and military elite; the conduct of the "War on Terror"; and the lack of a long-term plan to make America more secure and to deal effectively with the threat of militant Islam.

Careerism, political correctness, moral cowardice, disdain for expertise, arrogance, hubris: These are the characteristics of the Washington elite and of elite wannabes. Any perceptive person who has spent any time at all in or around the vast labyrinth of bureaus, departments, offices, corporations, and lobbying groups that constitute the home ground of our rulers can readily recognize the real villains of *Imperial Hubris*. Osama bin Laden and militant Islam may be the enemies we face, but the book's culprits are those chiefly responsible for allowing the threat to assume the magnitude it has—and they are not members of Al Qaeda.

"I intend in this book," Scheuer writes,

> to show that there is not now, and never has been, a shortage of knowledge about the nature and immediacy of the bin Laden threat, but only a lack of courage to tell the truth about it fully, openly and with disregard for the career-related consequences of truth-telling. Unfortunately, many in my generation of leaders find the task of doing their duty next to impossible. The failure of many to perform their duty lies at the heart of why three thousand Americans perished on 11 September 2001.

Some, having tried to tell the truth, were punished by a system that claims it wants its bureaucracy to "think outside the box" but, in fact, hates and fears honesty, integrity, and expertise in all things apart from career advancement. In the end, "you can lead jackasses to water, but you cannot make them drink."

Instead of doing their duty, which would entail "facing reality," our

> hubris-soaked . . . leaders, elites, and media, locked behind an impenetrable wall of political correctness and moral cowardice, act as naïve and arrogant cheerlead-



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> ers for the universal applicability of Western values and feckless military operations . . . while al Qaeda-led, anti-US hatred grows among Muslims, US leaders boast of being able to able to create democracy wherever they choose, ignoring history . . .

As a result, "it is fair to conclude that the United States of America remains bin Laden's only indispensable ally." Scheuer goes on to make a convincing case that the character of public "leadership" as described above not only helped make the September 11 attacks possible but is leading this country into quagmires in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Bush administration has ignored Afghanistan's bellicose history and is now engaged in the impossible task of turning her into a Western-style democracy. Washington, having failed to "check the checkables"—that is, review the readily available mass of information and reservoir of expertise on Afghanistan—is now feeding the public happy talk about having supposedly destroyed Al Qaeda's Afghan operation. Since the United States had no plan on the shelf for attacking Al Qaeda (a case of near-criminal neglect as presented in *Imperial Hubris*), Al Qaeda fighters were able to disperse and live to fight another day, while Bin Laden made good his escape. Afghanistan has not been anything less than a defeat, while the war there has only just begun to escalate, according to Scheuer.

If the Bush administration indeed has badly botched the Afghan operation, then what of the Iraqi campaign? "On Iraq, I must candidly say that I abhor aggressive wars like the one we waged there . . . [it was] an avaricious, premeditated, unprovoked war against a foe who posed no immediate threat," writes Scheuer. The U.S. invasion of Iraq was nothing less than "Osama bin Laden's gift from America, one he has long and ardently desired, but never realistically expected." An Iraq without Saddam would "obviously become what political scientists call a 'failed state' . . . a land where al Qaeda or al Qaeda-like organizations would thrive." Bin Laden could only dream of such a gift—until March 2003, when his dream came true. All he could have hoped for has come to pass. The United States, having already stayed too long, is insistent on a non-Islamic government that would subordinate the long-dominant Sunnis. Meanwhile, Arabs can see the destruction of the second holiest land in Islam, along with the prison torture scandal, on satellite TV and the internet. Young Islamic men are rushing to Iraq in the name of *jihad*, even as Washington is faced with the problem of dealing with a newly elected leadership weighted toward Shiites with historic ties to Iran. And all that is to say nothing of Kurdish aspirations in northern Iraq, where the establishment of a Kurdish state could provoke Turkish intervention. Does this look like a "mission accomplished" to anyone apart from the deluded inhabitants of the Bush White House?

Scheuer slams our elites for getting Bin Laden wrong: He is no mere terrorist, is certainly not a madman, and is (in spite of all the White House's "Islam is a religion of peace" claptrap) a revered figure among Muslims around the world, a man who has accomplished what other jihadists only dreamed of, by successfully uniting (with the help of the United States, Scheuer points out) a large segment of the Islamic world and making America the focus of his attention. "All told," writes Scheuer, Osama bin Laden is now "the most popular anti-American leader in the world today. His name is legend from Houston to Zanzibar to Jakarta, and his face and sayings are emblazoned on T-shirts, CD's, audio and video tapes, posters, photographs, cigarette lighters, and stationery across the earth." Bin Laden is the *de facto* leader of a worldwide Islamic insurgency.

Scheuer insists on using the term *insurgency* to describe the threat presented by Al Qaeda and related organizations, a threat which is global and strategic in nature. A "War on Terror" is a losing battle against a tactic, while countering an insurgency with clear war aims is something the West—the United States, especially—can and must get a handle on. Washington's chosen strategy of dealing with this insurgency as if it had a "home address," as Scheuer puts it, places the United States in the position of dealing with Al Qaeda as she might deal with a nation-state, one that can be defeated by invading and occupying territory.

Should the United States leave herself with only the military option (assuming Washington does not alter policies that have incited the Muslim world against America), then the war must be a total one, in Scheuer's view—a conflict that will involve great numbers of casualties among Muslims, both insurgents and civilians, and also among U.S. military personnel. The United States must target Al Qaeda insurgents, dig in her heels, and do the job with ground troops; American reliance on other forces to do the dirty work, as in Afghanistan, is flawed. The anti-Taliban Northern Alliance, for example, was not especially interested in rooting out Al Qaeda, and the fact of its cooperation against the Taliban does not translate into a pro-American stance; in fact, U.S. troops may soon be fighting their former "allies," as well as resurgent Taliban and Al Qaeda forces.

Scheuer has no illusions about the prospects for occupying or transforming Muslim states. His war aim would be annihilating Al Qaeda forces—period. While I agree that war with any foe should be fought ferociously, with every intention of destroying that foe, and that victories cannot be bloodless, Scheuer's prescription for total war cannot be justified by the Christian Faith he professes. Scheuer, at one point, cites Dresden as an example of the relentless warfare he considers necessary. Did firebombing the population of Dresden serve any lawful military purpose? Could such deliberate targeting of civilians ever be justified, even if it did? The author himself acknowledges that "this sort of bloody-mindedness is neither admirable nor desirable." And what of U.S. actions in Iraq? Has not every example of such "bloody-mindedness" only fueled the insurgency? I think Scheuer realizes that one could never kill enough to defeat the insurgency, once and for all.

The best long-term means to defuse Al Qaeda would be for the United States to amend her foreign policy, removing the chief motivation for an anti-American war. No, Al Qaeda would not disappear overnight. Muslims would remain hostile to the United States for some time; yet, as the author points out, Bin Laden himself has told us what fuels the Islamic insurgency. American support for Israel is at the top of his list, and the "War on Terror" is only prolonged by the occupation of Muslim territories in the Middle East. Militant Islam may despise and resent certain "Western values"—abortion, pornography, "gay marriage," and the like—but attacks on U.S. soil are motivated primarily by American policies that in no way promote American interests. The notion that Muslims hate America because she is democratic is preposterous, though satisfying to American self-righteousness. As Scheuer points out, America's ironclad alliance with Israel serves "no vital



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US national interest," while "binding the US Gulliver to the tiny Jewish state and its policies." American dependency on foreign sources of oil—and the power of the oil lobby in Washington that comes with it—has only increased our entanglement in the Middle East, a problem whose solution necessarily involves steps to lessen such dependency. Such steps would link well with Scheuer's further advice that Washington disengage from corrupt regimes widely hated in the Muslim world, especially Saudi Arabia. Insurgencies flourish when they are supported by a mass of sympathetic civilians. To defeat them, the causes of that support must be addressed.

Finally, Washington's commitment to globalism—and to the role of the United States as global policeman—has to be challenged. Citing George Washington's warnings of the dangers of "entangling alliances" and other sage advice from the Founding Fathers, Scheuer challenges the assumption that "America owes more to others than to itself" (always the American elite's default position on foreign affairs). Scheuer sensibly concludes that the ethnic, tribal, and religious conflicts around the globe are not America's business and, in any case, are beyond the capacity of any administration to understand. *Hubris* may not be strong enough a word to describe an imperial elite that thinks it can run the whole world, even though America's only "mandatory duty" is to "care for and defend itself."

*Imperial Hubris* is a rapid-fire, plain-spoken polemic stated with conviction and passion. It is flawed by repetition and the author's sometimes muddled prescriptions for dealing with a serious threat. It is perhaps too much to expect one volume to deal with such a vast subject comprehensively, though one wonders if the book's author has considered that the magnitude of the threat presented by Islamic violence would be diminished considerably if Washington overturned an immigration policy that has allowed an influx of potentially hostile peoples into this country. It seems apparent that the really "vital"—meaning life-or-death—threat to the West is from immigration and changing demographics. That said, Michael Scheuer's tough-minded and honest book is a much-needed antidote to the shallow and often deceptive information doled out by our elites and by the American media. Who will oppose the imperialists when all those like him in the U.S. security apparatus are silenced or purged?

*Corresponding editor Wayne Allensworth is the author of* The Russian Question *(Rowan & Littlefield).*

# An Afternoon Man

***by Derek Turner***

**Anthony Powell: A Life**
*by Michael Barber*
*New York: Overlook Press;*
*338 pp., $29.95*

**Understanding Anthony Powell**
*by Nicholas Birns*
*Columbia: University of South Carolina Press; 408 pp., $39.95*

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Anthony Powell has been variously called "the English Proust" and "a master of wit, paradox and social delineation"; Kingsley Amis said, "I would rather read Mr. Powell than any English novelist now writing." He was an admired contemporary, friend, or patron of such important 20th-century figures as Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh, Cyril Connolly, George Orwell, Osbert Lancaster, Sacheverell Sitwell, Constant Lambert, Cecil Beaton, John Betjeman, and Malcolm Muggeridge. His 12-volume novel sequence *A Dance to the Music of Time* has been dubbed "the greatest modern novel since *Ulysses*" (Clive James) and "one of English fiction's few twentieth-century masterpieces" (John Lanchester).

It is unnecessary here to provide full details of Powell's life, which are comprehensively supplied in both of the books under review, but it may be useful to sketch in the chief landmarks. Powell (pronounced "Po-ell") was born in London in 1905, the only child of an army captain of Welsh squirearchy antecedents who later rose to the rank of colonel, and of Maud Wells-Dymoke, distantly descended from the Lincolnshire family who were—indeed still are—hereditary King's Champions. (King's Champions are supposed to be present on horseback, fully armored, whenever each new monarch is being crowned in case there are any challengers to the throne—a ritual which sadly hasn't been performed since the coronation of George IV in 1820.)

He attended Eton between 1919 and 1923, then went to Oxford to study history. Powell had his first novel (*Afternoon Men*) published in 1931. In 1934, he married Lady Violet Pakenham, daughter of an Irish peer, to whom he remained married until his death. (She died in 2002; they had two sons.) During World War II, he served in the Intelligence Corps, rising to the rank of major. In 1948, he published the highly regarded *John Aubrey and His Friends*; it was followed in 1951 by *A Question of Upbringing*, the first of the dozen volumes of *A Dance to the Music of Time*. (The final volume, *Hearing Secret Harmonies*, appeared in 1975.) Anthony Powell was awarded a CBE in 1956. In 1958, *At Lady Molly's*, the fourth volume in *Dance*, was awarded the James Tait Black Memorial Prize. In 1973, Powell declined a knighthood, from his belief that writers should not be honored for services to literature alone—a sentiment he shared with Kipling and Galsworthy. In 1974, *Temporary Kings*, *Dance*'s 11th volume, received the W.H. Smith Prize. In 1988, Powell was named a Companion of Honour. He died at home in Somerset on March 28, 2000.

Although Powell wrote seven other novels, two plays, four volumes of memoirs, and edited or contributed to journals including the *Times Literary Supplement*, *Punch*, the *Spectator*, and the *Daily Telegraph*, he is chiefly commemorated for *A Dance to the Music of Time*, a *roman-fleuve* named after Nicholas Poussin's famous 1638-40 painting in the Wallace Collection in London. ("An almost hypnotic spell seems cast by this masterpiece on the beholder. I knew all at once that Poussin had expressed at least one important aspect of what the novel must be," Powell once noted.)

The narrator, Nicholas Jenkins, is enigmatic, almost a cipher, acting mostly as a mere observer and recorder of a cast of over 300 characters, most notably the odious, Uriah Heep-reminiscent Kenneth Widmerpool. Widmerpool, whose name Powell borrowed from an historical Roundhead captain of horse—a hint, perhaps, of Powell's political sympathies—is a contemporary of Jenkins (albeit slightly older). He is oleaginous, ambitious, and self-absorbed; his most salient trait is what *Understanding Anthony Powell*'s author, Nicholas Birns, calls "craven acquiescence to whatever he perceives to be the prevailing power of the day." Throughout the book, Widmerpool is a *leitmo-*



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*tiv*, metamorphosing from socially insecure schoolboy derided by his "fellows" to, in turn, go-ahead businessman, friend of Mrs. Wallis Simpson, Stalinist fellow traveler, and member of a hippie cult, always wishing to be a part of whatever he thinks to be the prevailing *Zeitgeist*. Widmerpool, though almost sociopathic, is also pitiable for his gaucheness, loneliness, want of imagination, and ultimate failure. He may be viewed, as Tories such as Evelyn Waugh (and indeed Powell himself) seem to have viewed him, as a fictional summation of all that went wrong with Britain during the 20th century, as the country fell into the fumbling hands of the technocrats and "managers of decline."

It is perhaps surprising, therefore, that Michael Barber's book should be the first full-length biography of this undoubted literary leviathan. The chief reason is that Powell was opposed to any biography appearing during his lifetime (although there were later suggestions that he had changed his mind and had even selected a biographer) and, in fact, actively hindered Barber's researches by ensuring that various archives were made inaccessible to him. Yet even had Powell been a willing subject, doing justice to someone that complex was always going to be a daunting prospect.

Powell's is a voluminous and highly sophisticated *oeuvre*, and his life was inextricably and confusingly intertwined with a galaxy of enormous talents. Powell is still close in historical time, perhaps too close for objective analysis. He was also an essentially private person, his four volumes of memoirs (*To Keep the Ball Rolling*) notwithstanding; but then Powell always regarded memoirs as being fundamentally unreliable, owing to the author's need to entertain and engage readers. He was once described by the *New York Times* as "a writer of mordant succinctness who rewards the reader while revealing little of himself." James Lee-Milne concurred: "[Powell] discloses nothing about himself, but is revealing, albeit cautiously, of his contemporaries' follies," while Nicholas Birns notes that Powell's works are characterized by "the amused, reserved acceptance of what happens." Powell himself admitted that he was "frightfully buttoned-up." These qualities ensured that he avoided the kind of widespread fame during his life that was extended to comparable figures such as Greene and Betjeman during their lifetimes, and they make him often difficult to define.

Powell's political sympathies may also have deterred potential biographers. Powell was an instinctive Tory, acutely aware of "the sombre demands of the past becoming at times almost suffocating in their insistence" (as he makes Jenkins say about his school in *A Question of Upbringing*), who admired Margaret Thatcher. He disliked ideologies and ideologues, and abstained wholly from "Vin Audenaire" (as he cleverly dubbed the favorite hallucinogenic drug of the 1930's); and several Soviet fellow travelers, including Quiggins and St. John Clarke, are gently mocked in *Dance*.

It is easy to imagine how some would-be modern Boswells might have been put off by various of Powell's expressed sentiments (cited by Michael Barber), such as "a democratic upheaval ensures only that the reins of government are given over into the hands of the morally and intellectually deficient" (*Cherwell*, June 14, 1924), or (in a letter of 1992) "much against my taste I would have been for Franco in preference to a Left dominated by Communists." Some left-of-center *litterateurs* probably view him as a British Junger or Raspail. In later life, Powell certainly felt that he had suffered professionally by refusing to become "committed" to one or other modish cause. Yet he was always careful never to let his visceral sympathies run too far in the other direction. When nominated for the T.S. Eliot Award for Creative Writing by the Ingersoll Foundation in 1984, Powell made it clear that he would only accept if he were not expected to endorse the foundation's tenets of "Judeo-Christian values" and the Ten Commandments, confining himself to saying that he was "broadly speaking sympathetic" to them.

Other potential biographers might feel troubled by Powell's perceived "snobbery"—an accusation that appears to have no more basis than that he went to Eton and Oxford and wrote mostly about the social milieu in which he was lucky enough to live. Further criticism has been made by Christopher Hitchens, generally a Powell fan, who scolded him for not featuring any pro-fascist characters in *Dance*, as if Powell were covering up for upper-class Hitlerism. Yet, as both Barber and Birns are at pains to point out, this omission simply reflects the fact that Powell did not know many—or any—such people and, therefore, could not draw upon them for so autobiographical a work. Both authors are also anxious to absolve Powell from occasional allegations of antisemitism—allegations that are risible, based as they are solely on such bland fictive exchanges as "'I suppose he's a Jew.' 'I suppose so'" (from *Afternoon Men*). Today, no doubt, Powell's well-known interest in genealogy and inheritance (he believed, says Barber in his first sentence, "that it was rare to find exceptional people without exceptional antecedents") could be ascribed to "classism," a belief in eugenics, or maybe even subtle "racism."

Both Barber and Birns have made heroic efforts to come to grips with their intriguing subject, and both have largely succeeded. Birns (who teaches humanities at New School University in New York City and was a cofounder of the Anthony Powell Society—*www.anthonypowell.org.uk*) has overwritten in places—so anxious to cover every possible Powell angle that he gets carried away. On page eight, for instance, he is talking about some misunderstandings about Powell that have crept in on the U.S. side of the Atlantic, which is useful—but then he feels constrained to digress about some (wholly unrelated) U.K. misunderstandings of U.S. subjects. This looks a little bit like showing off. There are also slightly tedious literary in-jokes, such as that on page 92: "the segment of *Dance* most suitable for inclusion in the *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, which event would indeed be a sign of the apocalypse." Curiously for a Powell *aficionado*, there are even hints of class-based aggrievedness. On page 11, for instance, Birns speaks of

> the build up of the American university system along German lines, which ratcheted up the degree of rigor with which Anglophone academic scholarship was pursued and evicted sherry-drinking amateurs from the Edenic bowers.

Quite apart from the question of whether Anglophone academic scholarship *really* became more rigorous in the postwar period, the clichéd imagery and sentiments are clunkingly reminiscent of lines spoken by Jenkins' embittered Uncle Giles in *Dance*.

One feels a little guilty mentioning these foibles, because, overall, this book is a remarkable achievement and will prove invaluable to anyone who really wants to know about Powell's world. (Birns covers not *Dance* only but also Powell's fiction of the 1930's and 1980's, his memoirs, and his journals.) Its very earnestness—and



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earnestness is surely a *sine qua non* for the sort of person who sets up literary societies—makes *Understanding Anthony Powell* seem reliable and solid to the point of stolidity. The chronology is comprehensive, the bibliography is detailed, the text is highly informed, and the insights are illuminating; really, I could not imagine a more useful guide to have conveniently at hand, whether one is reading Powell for the first time or the tenth.

Barber, whose previous book was an acclaimed biography of Simon Raven, and who has written the entry on Powell for the *New Dictionary of National Biography*, has a lighter touch. (Overlook Press, incidentally, is connected to Duckworth, Powell's first publisher.) Sometimes, indeed, his touch is slightly too light for my taste (as Powell said in 1962, "people often put their preferences in literature down to a number of things that don't count, when it's all based on personal preference!"), with words like *floozy* and *lousy* cropping up, along with such remarks as that Oxford "undergraduettes" are so lacking in sex appeal that "many young men thought it sapiens to be homo." Perhaps, however, such breezy slang is appropriate when dealing with Powell's Oxford days, which encompassed the Jazz Age, whose flippant echoes reverberate so marvelously in Powell's books. Moreover, Barber's prose tone does darken as a fitting accompaniment to the changing historical background and is generally more elegant than not.

Because of the circumstances enumerated above, and because there is no other full biography of Powell to compare this to, an evaluation of Barber's book is really quite difficult. The lack of access to various archives he complains about does not appear, on the surface of it, to have made any material difference to the work in hand—but then, as we do not know what is in the closed archives (or even which particular archives he is talking about), how are we to judge competently, one way or another? *Anthony Powell: A Life* certainly feels satisfyingly well researched and aesthetically rounded, and it is hard for a nonspecialist to suggest how it might be improved. Perhaps the best policy is simply to conclude, in true restrained, Powellian fashion, that "when a book is bad its faults are pretty obvious, so you say to yourself, well, here's how not to do it."

*Derek Turner is the editor of* Right Now!, *published in London.*

# The True Fire Within

*by Clyde Wilson*

**Henry Timrod: A Biography**
*by Walter Brian Cisco*
*Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; 168 pp., $38.50*

◆

Henry Timrod died in 1867 at the age of 39 from tuberculosis—his end aggravated and hastened by inadequate food and the rigors of eking out a living amidst the charred ruins of South Carolina's capital city. The newspaper that had provided the only income for himself, his wife, his child, and his widowed sister's large family had gone up in Sherman's fire. Timrod described the last period of his life as "beggary, starvation, death, bitter grief, utter want of hope" and added: "I would consign every line I ever wrote to eternal oblivion for one-hundred dollars in hand." The man who spoke thus may well have been America's greatest poet living at the time.

Consider the first and last stanzas of his "ode" sung in 1866 as ladies brought flowers to the otherwise undecorated graves of 600 Confederates killed in the long siege of Charleston:

Sleep sweetly in your humble
graves,
Sleep, martyrs of a fallen cause!
Though yet no marble column
craves
The pilgrim here to pause.
. . .
Stoop, angels, hither from the
skies!
There is no holier spot of
ground,
Than where defeated valour lies
By mourning beauty crowned.

For my money, no better lines of verse came out of the great American bloodletting of the 1860's. The experts, of course, would say that we should prefer as a dirge the lines from the—shall we say—flamboyant Walt Whitman in "O Captain! My Captain!":

But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

Perhaps the experts are right in their preference for the most representative, if not the best, American poet.

Timrod was well recognized from the 1850's onward as a powerful, profound, versatile, and subtle poet, though he is best known for the poems that expressed the deepest sentiments of the Southern people during and after the war. Whittier described Timrod's verse as "very powerful & impressive. . . . He had the true fire within." The Gentle Quaker poet looked forward to the time "when no sectional feeling will interfere with the recognition of his genius." Longfellow concurred, predicting that, in the future, Timrod's verse "will have a place in every cultivated home in the United States." These were generous sentiments, especially as Timrod had a greater range and depth as poet than either of the New England laureates.

Their predictions did not come true. A volume of Timrod's collected verse was never published in his lifetime and, then, not until six years after his death—only because of the extraordinary efforts of friends. The popular anthologies are hardly aware that he ever existed.

Timrod has had to wait even longer for a biographer, but the wait was worth it. Cisco has written extensively on South Carolina notables. (He has a new biography of the neglected military and political giant, Gen. Wade Hampton, in press.) He gives us the life of the man and poet straightforwardly and from primary sources. This is a proper biography without any of the distorting theorizing (actually dime-store Marxism) that pervades so much historical writing these days. We have the opportunity to recover Timrod and some lost elements of American culture as well.

*Clyde Wilson realized about 35 years ago that he was no poet.*

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# Letter From Madrid

*by Curtis Cate*

## Farewell to Indolence?

◆

Spain, Voltaire once observed (expressing the scorn that many Frenchmen feel for those unlucky enough to have been born on the wrong side of the Pyrenees), is "*le pays de la paresse*"—the land of laziness. For a long time, paradoxically, this was part of her charm, part of the magnetic attraction, of the "Byron syndrome" that drew so many English travelers—from George Borrow and Richard Ford right down to Gerald Brenan—to settle down in the peninsula and to record its eccentric ways. A land where it was customary to lunch between 2 and 3 in the afternoon, to dine any time from 9:30 on until midnight, after enjoying a good two-hour siesta, was clearly no ordinary country. It was alluringly exotic, refreshingly non-European, and thus seemed to be—as Tom Burns Marañon, the grandson of a famous Spanish writer and endocrinologist, has aptly written—a heaven-sent "reserve of natives living on the periphery of Europe, torn between indolence and militancy, and thus a fascinating 'target' for seekers after adventure and strong emotions."

It would be oversimplifying matters to say that this romantic, essentially 19th-century view of Spain has little to do with present-day realities.

Irksome though it has been for many, the Madrileños have learned to keep reasonably strict office hours. However, they obstinately continue to lunch and dine at what, by European standards, are distinctly odd hours. In Madrid, the bars and cafés tend to be almost empty before 2 P.M., after which they are submerged by garrulous wine drinkers and *aficionados* of "Tío Pepe," *manzanilla*, and other forms of sherry, who interrupt or punctuate their sentences with sausage or shellfish *tapas* and small, sandwich-like *bocadillos*, which, as the name suggests, can be consumed in a single mouthful.

Madrid, essentially an administrative capital, was never a major magnet for foreign travelers and seekers of the exotic, being far outstripped in touristic sex appeal by Alfonso the Wise's and Charles V's ancient capital of Toledo; the old university town of Salamanca; Santa Teresa's brick-walled city of Avila; the strongly Moorish cities of Cordova and Granada; the Andalucían capital of Sevilla, with its *Semana santa* processions and tumultuous *Feria*; and the Atlantic seaport of Santiago de Compostella, in relatively verdant Galicia, which ranks immediately after Rome as Europe's most prestigious target for Christian pilgrims.

Unlike older cities such as Paris, London, Vienna, Prague, and Rome, Madrid is a relatively recent capital, having been founded in 1561 on a fairly barren plain lying southeast of the Guadarrama mountain range by Emperor Charles V's dyspeptic son, Philip II, who realized that trying to transform the old fortress town of Toledo, with its maze of narrow, upward-winding streets, into a modern imperial city would be an impossible task. What it lost in medieval picturesqueness, the new Spanish capital gained in urban automobility; for, with the exception of a small area of narrow streets leading up to the quaintly arcaded Plaza Mayor, Madrid is, to a large extent, a gridiron city, with parallel streets encompassing "blocks" of houses, intersected here and there by major avenues—not unlike Savannah or Washington, D.C.

When I visited it more than 50 years ago, Madrid was a somewhat provincial capital of one million souls, the center of which had been slightly damaged by shells randomly aimed by General Franco's gunners at key government buildings. Cars were a rarity—Spain had not yet embarked on the production of her first pseudonational automobile, the Seat (designed in the Fiat workshops of Turin); the underground subway system was still grossly underdeveloped; and Madrid was basically a city of tram-and-bus riders and pedestrians. The city boasted a few theaters; the Opera was a national joke or tragedy (depending on one's taste); and the city's sole cultural jewel was the Prado Museum.

Today, the buses have largely replaced the trams; the metro system has been enormously extended; Madrid's streets and avenues teem with European and Japanese cars (many of the latest Peugeot and Renault models being manufactured in Spanish factories); and the city now numbers more than four million inhabitants. The handsome redbrick apartment blocks, which, in the early 1950's, had begun their semi-high-rise march toward the north, have since been joined by concrete and glass-paned skyscrapers, which extend in all directions for miles on end. The theaters have hardly changed, and the Madrid Opera is still nothing to brag about, but the city now boasts three magnificent museums, with the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection and an admirable Museum of Modern Art both within easy walking distance of the Prado, which make this leafy corner of Madrid the most concentrated repository of great paintings in all of Europe.

In one respect, the city has changed dramatically—and, I cannot help feeling, for the worse. Forty years ago, apartment buildings in central Madrid were guarded at night by watchmen, charmingly named *serenos*. Anyone returning home at any hour of the night had only to clap his hands, and soon the *sereno* would appear, armed with a truncheon and a huge bunch of keys, one for each apartment building's entrance door. Particularly agreeable was the conversation that habitually accompanied the *propina* (tip). There are Spaniards who claim that, since the abolition of the *serenos*, (not long after Franco's death in 1975), the streets of Madrid have ceased to be safe at night. Others argue that this venerable institution had to be abolished, because it provoked endless administrative squabbles among competing apartment overseers, and also because the *serenos* acted as watchful police informers.

Loath as are many Spanish Republican diehards to admit it, what is now often called the "economic miracle" of modern Spain—today, the world's leading olive-oil producer, the seventh in automobile construction, a partner in the construction of the European Airbus—was, in fact, launched during the last years of Franco's "regency" by his prime minister, Adm. Carrero Blanco, and several enlightened Catholics belonging to the lay Opus Dei order, led by Alberto Ullastres, who, after serving as minister of commerce, went on to become Spain's first ambassador to the European Common Market.

This essentially "liberal" policy of en-



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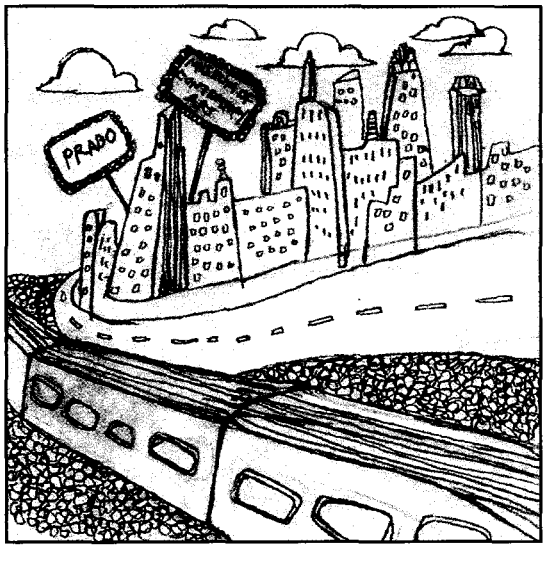
couraging free enterprise was judiciously continued, after the restoration of the monarchy under King Juan Carlos, by Spain's first Socialist prime minister, Felipe Gonzalez, a charismatic lawyer from Sevilla. Three times reelected—in 1986, 1989, and 1993—though each time with a diminished majority, Gonzalez successfully reinserted Spain into the existing concert of European nations by having her admitted to the Common Market and NATO in 1986. But for a series of corruption scandals, in which his party was heavily implicated, he would probably have been reelected for a fourth time in 1996.

His conservative successor, José María Aznar, who had begun his life as an obscure treasury official, made up for what he lacked in personal charisma by a kind of Sancho Panza horse sense and the realization that, to succeed in democratic politics, one must try to occupy the "middle ground."

Had he been less pig-headed, Aznar—or, at any rate, his party—might still be in power today. But early in 2003, he decided, like Tony Blair in Britain, to defy domestic public opinion, violently opposed to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, by proclaiming his support for President George W. Bush. This was asking for trouble in a country that is probably the most anti-American in Europe, ever ready to blame "yankis" for every conceivable woe—from the loss of her imperial colonies in the Caribbean and the Pacific to the American corruption of her relaxed lifestyle, culture, and good manners (for Spain is still a land of *caballeros*, where such matters count a lot).

In May 1985, when Ronald Reagan made a three-day visit to Madrid, a plan to have him entertained in the Town Hall had to be called off at the last moment when the U.S. embassy discovered that the mayor, a maverick Socialist professor named Enrique Tierno Galván, was sardonically planning to deliver a speech in Latin, of which his illustrious guest would not have understood a word. More recently, in a public-opinion poll undertaken early in 2004 to measure the popularity of foreign countries, the United States ranked next to the last—one notch higher than strongly disliked and distrusted Morocco!



Elizabeth Wolf

It is clear that the Aznar government was singularly inept, in the aftermath of the devastating Atocha Station train bombings of March 11, 2004, in trying to claim that they were the work of ETA Basque separatists—with Foreign Minister Ana Palacio, in particular, losing her head and telephoning newspapers and TV stations in Madrid to insist that the diabolical explosions were *not* the work of Islamic terrorists. Many Spaniards felt that they were being lied to once again by an arrogant government that had bamboozled them into supporting a war fought to uncover an Iraqi dictator's "weapons of mass destruction." The result was the stinging electoral rebuff of March 17, when Spain's Socialists were returned to power with, nationally, 42.6 percent of the vote and 164 parliamentary seats (compared with 37.6 percent and 148 seats for Aznar's crestfallen PP).

This electoral triumph was surprising, given the lack of charisma of the Socialist Party's new leader, José Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, a model *paterfamilias* from the northern city of León whose mild, accommodating ways have won him the nickname of Bambi and the reputation, particularly with the *señoritas*, of being *soso* (insipid).

A determination to overcome this "handicap" may explain the new prime minister's readiness to be undiplomatic in his relations with the government of the United States. During the Spanish National Holiday celebrations of October 12, 2003, marked by a military parade that included a tiny U.S. contingent of a half-dozen flag-carrying Marines, Rodriguez Zapatero remained ostentatiously seated. After his party's electoral triumph five months later, he ordered the prompt withdrawal of the 1,900-man contingent that the Aznar government had dispatched to Iraq and, later, made a trip to Tunis, where he publicly stressed his conviction that the invasion of Iraq had been a "flagrant error" made by persons (*i.e.*, the United States) who had disqualified themselves as policymakers in the Middle East.

Washington's response to these diplomatic pinpricks was not long in coming. The U.S. ambassador, George Argyros, chose to repay Rodriguez Zapatero in his own coin by absenting himself from the National Day parade of October 12, 2004. A few days later, he made his displeasure felt by urging the new Spanish defense minister, José Bono, to tell Rodriguez Zapatero (in blunt words that unleashed an uproar in the Madrid press) "to stop kicking me in the shins!"

*Curtis Cate, who knows the country well, personally edited a special issue on Spain in the early 1960's, when he was working for the* Atlantic Monthly.

# Letter From Kosovo

***by Egor Engelhardt***

## A Prison Without Walls

◆

In the second half of February, I visited Kosovo and Metohija with a Russian humanitarian team that brought 12 tons of food, medicines, and school supplies to the surrounded Serbian enclaves of Lipljan, Batuse, and Priluzje, where the inhabitants have, over two months, had their electricity, heating, and water cut off by the newly elected local Albanian administration. Among the supplies we brought were heaters for the schools.

Traveling through the remaining Serbian communities in Kosovo from Mitrovica southward is much like taking a journey through a huge prison: from the most humane correctional workshop (the Kosovska Mitrovica region) to solitary confinement (Lipljan). Lipljan dwellers have been confined to a ghetto of two small streets. Their children have been cast out of the 140-year-old local school and now meet in a hut that resembles a ruined stable and is heated with improvised ovens. We did not visit Gorazdevac or Orahovac, so I can only take Lipljaners at their word when they call their village "paradise" compared to those places.

As in a prison, the notion of "freedom" was constantly on the lips of the inmates: "In Gracanica, the Serbs have real free-



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dom, compared to Lipljan" said Boro, a Lipljan school official. "In Mitrovica, it's freedom, compared to Gracanica," said Dr. Ljubisa Foljevic, professor of Pristina University, now a refugee in Mitrovica.

You soon begin to understand why they appreciate freedom above all. They cannot travel safely between their enclaves. Every journey through Albanian-held territory is like Russian roulette—the locals of Kosovo determine one another's ethnic allegiance in a matter of seconds. And there are no convoys of peacekeepers for common villagers—only for foreigners.

We entered Kosovo at about 6 P.M. and did not seen electric light in a single house all the way to Mitrovica. Gracanica looks like a real ghetto—people just mill around the small city perimeter, with nothing to do. For the past six years, these farmers have not been able to go to their fields. Now, they regard as the luckiest those who have a small plot of land in the near vicinity or in their own backyards. A field that is four kilometers away is as far as one on Mars. Some farmers tried to venture out that far to work their fields but were killed by their Albanian neighbors.

The small shops that we observed looked more like status symbols than genuine business ventures; no customers were around to buy the modest goods, proudly displayed in the morning and shyly put away in the evening.

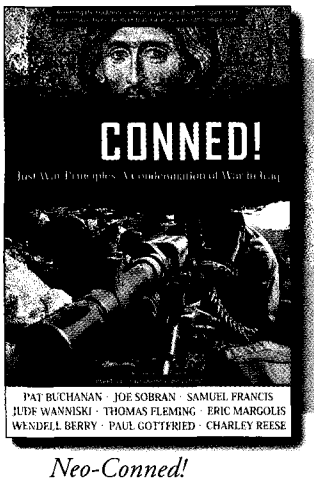
The mind-set of ghetto dwellers and prison inmates is much alike—constant fear, dependence on another's will, poor but more or less stable housing and food, no freedom. Darko, an official from the Belgrade Kosovo Coordination Center, told us stories about Kosovo refugees in Serbia who give dozens of reasons not to apply for work, similar to ex-prisoners with their socialization problems. Their weathered houses are old and small compared to the ongoing building boom of Kosovo Albanians.

Even in such awful conditions, the people of the Serbian ghettos still maintain their dignity, friendliness, and bravery. Mr. Crvenkovic of Lipljan told us that there are more babies born now in the enclaves than before. They would not fear the Albanians if they were free to defend themselves, but the KFOR "peacekeepers" prevent them from doing so. Teachers boasted of their pupils, who are most inspiring—dignified, cultured, though they live in constant danger and total isolation from the outer world.

As we rode by Pristina on a gloomy afternoon, architect Ljubisha Foljevic pointed through the bus window to the house where his flat was in Pristina, the university where he taught, the buildings he had built in the city. He hasn't been to his flat in six years and has no hope of seeing it again. Bobana Sokic, a language teacher from Pristina who is now in Lipljan, feels crippled without her dictionaries and textbooks.

No resolution to this crisis is on the horizon; the two main Kosovo communities are still extremely hostile toward each other. Both believe that the land belongs to them. The mantras of tolerance and multiculturalism have not affected the real behavior of the common people. The local Serbs do not recognize the newly elected Kosovo officials as their legitimate government, nor does that government recognize them as citizens: The utilities crisis, for example, was the result of action taken by the new Kosovo Albanian officials who cut off supplies from the Serbs. The Albanians claimed that the Serbs have not paid for utilities since 1999—but neither have the Albanians.

*Egor Engelhardt is a Russian scholar.*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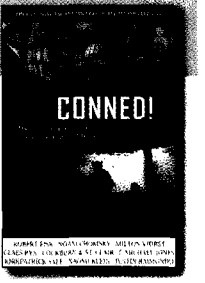


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LIBERALISM

# SpongeBob and a Transgendered Sock Puppet

*by Mark Tooley*

Cultural debate over sex roles has reached such a fever pitch that even the sexual preference of the children's cartoon character SpongeBob Squarepants has become a topic of great concern.

Conservative religious broadcaster Dr. James Dobson expressed alarm that a new educational campaign to tout "tolerance" and "diversity" was employing the images of SpongeBob, Big Bird, and Barney, among others. The We Are Family Foundation, which is distributing a video to schools, has included materials equating sexual practice with race and "gender," arousing Dobson's suspicions.

Dobson's alarm was portrayed by the media as an "outing" of SpongeBob, who, as a cartoon and as a sponge, presumably has neither a sex nor an active sexual life. The episode was similar to one involving Jerry Falwell several years ago. His ministry's newspaper carried an article citing homosexual groups that claimed the *Teletubbies* character Tinky Winky as one of their own. The seemingly male Tinky carries a purse and has an upside-down triangle (a symbol of "gay" pride) on top of his head.

"Falwell Outs Tinky Winky," chortled a hundred newspaper headlines.

Of course, Dobson, like Falwell before him, tried to explain, but it was useless. It's a story too delicious to ignore, true or not: Mean Religious Right Leader Attacks Gay Children's Character!

The latest twist is that liberal religious officials, anxious to showcase their own "tolerance" and "diversity," have jumped in to contrast themselves with conservative (*i.e.*, bigoted and intolerant) religionists.

The 1.3-million-member United Church of Christ, one of America's most liberal denominations (its historic ties to the Puritans of old notwithstanding), was quick to comment on the SpongeBob episode. "Absolutely, the UCC extends an unequivocal welcome to SpongeBob," church president John Thomas gushed. "Jesus didn't turn people away. Neither do we."

Thomas's warm welcome for SpongeBob fit nicely with the UCC's recent television campaign, which features bouncers outside a church turning away racial minorities and a same-sex couple. *The UCC is NOT like that!*, the ad enthuses, contrasting the tolerant UCC with other, more close-minded denominations. The major networks rejected the ad, fearing it touched too closely on the national debate on same-sex unions, but cable networks have been running the UCC promo.

Thomas also extended a warm welcome from the UCC to Barney, Big Bird, Tinky Winky, Clifford the Big Red Dog, and, according to a UCC press release, "any who have experienced the Christian message as a harsh word of judgment rather than Jesus' offering of grace."

"Resistance to our message is formidable," Thomas explained of his denomination's professed inclusiveness, "because we're cutting against the prevailing grain of a society that is afraid of the stranger suspicious of difference and easily seduced by narrowly defined theological boundaries."

It is difficult to picture Thomas's Puritan spiritual ancestors, such as Jonathan Edwards, Cotton Mather, or John Winthrop, posing with a stuffed children's puppet to make a political point, yet a photo of SpongeBob visiting with Thomas at the UCC national headquarters was included with a UCC news release.

Apparently, the UCC's pledge of solidarity with SpongeBob was not enough. The We Are Family Foundation decided to remove references to sexual orientation in the materials it is distributing to 61,000 elementary schools—while insisting that it was only shortening the guides, not responding to pressure. Dobson's Focus on the Family nonetheless hailed the decision as a victory, and, predictably, UCC officials were angry. Thomas fired back a press release, declaring that

> For Focus on the Family to bully groups like the We Are Family Foundation because of their efforts to teach children about respect for those who are different only leads to bullying on the playground. . . . What's Christian or American about that?

Lest the UCC be singled out for religious silliness, don't forget that the Episcopal Church, U.S.A., is still on the loose! Both churches are among the fastest-declining denominations in America and are considered the most "inclusive" regarding sexual matters. The Episcopalians, however, are probably more creative. At Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, seminary mascot Chapel Mouse has "come out" in time for "Queer Week" on campus.

In a column for the seminary newsletter, the mouse sock puppet announced that he is changing his name to Ms. Chapelle Mouse. Do not assume that Chapelle will be dressing as a female mouse, however! If you do, you have succumbed to society's artificial and restrictive sex expectations. Chapelle will remain male in appearance to protest the false "construction" of a "binary gender system" by a "dominant society" that assumes everyone must look male or female.

"Gender is a fluid and mutable category, open to a range of emotion and identity," explains the sock-puppet mouse. "We cross the boundaries of the traditional binary gender system all the time in our daily lives. In short, Ms. Mouse is a transgendered mouse."

Chappelle Mouse helpfully explains that how you look to others doesn't matter. Social constructions of "gender" may "trap or free you." Chappelle, who will not be "going high fem" anytime soon, reminds us that "female identified" people look great in trousers, too.

The Episcopal sock puppet has probably been reading *Omnigender: A Trans-Religious Approach*, by Episcopal writer Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, who denounces the artificial and harmful static "gender" assumptions that force transgendered persons, and other curious people, to choose permanently between male and female identities.

That the secular entertainment industry would employ children's characters to tout new visions of a sexless and libidinous society was probably inevitable. That churches would be far more bold in claiming the promises of the sexual revo-



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lution and of a new omnigender utopia is perhaps a little more surprising.

*Mark D. Tooley is a research associate at the Institute on Religion and Democracy.*

TERRORISM

# American Terrorists, Environmental-Style

*by Doug Bandow*

Terrorists are on the loose in America—enviroterrorists. In early August 2003, radical environmentalists apparently burned down an apartment complex under construction in San Diego. Ecoterrorists next attacked four SUV dealerships in West Covina, a Los Angeles suburb.

These crimes were likely perpetrated by the so-called Environmental Liberation Front (ELF), which has long boasted of committing arson and bombings. In 2002, ELF issued "an open call for direct action." It also took responsibility for torching a Forest Service lab in Pennsylvania. The SUV vandals painted "ELF" on a number of vehicles. In mid-September 2003, federal agents arrested a 25-year-old member of a co-op supposedly dedicated to peace and environmentalism for perpetrating the SUV incident.

The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) is similar. The two groups are blamed for causing $45 million in damage in a campaign involving at least 600 arsons and other incidents going back to 1996. ALF's spokesman explains: "It's a war. A long, hard, bloody, war."

And it's a war about which most Americans are unaware.

Ecoterrorism started to receive attention in the early 1970's when "the Fox," a lone environmental activist, engaged in a sustained campaign of ecosabotage against several Chicago-area firms. Groups called the Bolt Weevils in Minnesota and Eco-raiders in Arizona carried out similar attacks.

The group Environmental Action published a self-help guide, *Ecotage!*, in 1972. A few years later, Edward Abbey romanticized ecoterrorism in his novel *The Monkey Wrench Gang*. As Abbey explained, "If opposition is not enough, we must resist. And if resistance is not enough, then subvert."

Nevertheless, there was no formal structure for ecoteurs until 1981, when Dave Foreman, a former lobbyist for the Wilderness Society, founded Earth First! a group that claimed credit for some relatively innocuous (if not quite kosher) activities, such as disrupting industry press conferences. Anything serious was blamed on individuals.

Foreman, later convicted for conspiring to sabotage an electrical power pylon in Arizona, argued that monkeywrenching "is morally required" as "self-defense on the part of the Earth." He admitted that Earth First! was formed "to inspire others to carry out activities straight from the pages of *The Monkey Wrench Gang*" and later coauthored *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*.

Examples of ecotage became common. Ecoteurs spiked trees with metal spikes, as well as ceramic ones to avoid detection. Loggers in California and Oregon were injured while cutting down trees. After a worker was seriously injured when a hidden spike shattered a saw blade in a lumber mill, Foreman responded: "the old-growth forest in North Idaho is a hell of a lot more important than Joe Six-pack."

Spikes were placed on trails in National Forests to puncture tires; wire was strung to disrupt races. Ecoteurs destroyed an electrical substation in Canada; vandalized a ski lift in Arizona; wrecked a utility bridge in Montana; cut power lines in Arizona, Colorado, and Utah; and damaged construction equipment at various sites. Ranches were another target.

Over a decade, such activities represent less than a reign of terror, though some extreme environmentalists seemed ready to inaugurate one. The publication *Earth First!* once ran an anonymous letter that declared:

> The only way to stop all the destruction of our home is to decrease the birth rate or increase the death rate of people. . . . It does no good to kill a few selected folks. That is a retail operation. What we need is a wholesale operation. . . . The simple expedient: biological warfare!

If Osama bin Laden had only used environmental rhetoric, maybe he would be celebrated rather than execrated in America today.

Luckily, Earth First! never initiated biological war and ultimately folded. But ELF and ALF have moved to the fore.

Both organizations began in Britain. Since 1996, they, together with their decentralized affiliates, are thought to account for some 600 incidents, including an arson attack on a veterinary diagnostic lab, animal theft, wrecking a government predator-control project, firebombing meat-industry and circus vehicles, and destroying an animal-research facility.

The events of September 11, 2001, did not deter them from their terrorist


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campaign. After that attack, the groups claimed responsibility for firebombing a primate-research center, burning down a federal corral for wild horses, disrupting an Iowa mink farm, spiking trees, and firebombing a McDonald's. In February 2002, two ALF activists were arrested while planning to destroy dairy trucks. The organizations' websites offer advice on committing arson.

These terrorist activities probably pose a more serious threat than did the ecotage practiced by Earth First!'s acolytes. ALF and ELF act in urban areas as well as wilderness lands. Arson has become their tool of choice, one that is likely eventually to kill people as well as destroy property.

Mainstream environmental groups have done little to discourage ecoteurs. When questioned about Earth First!'s activities two decades ago, Sierra Club executive director Michael McCloskey opined:

> We no more have an obligation to run around denouncing extremists using the environmental movement than Republicans and Democrats have an obligation to go around spending most of their time condemning the views of left or right-wing extremists.

However, even extreme liberals and conservatives typically do not advocate violent tactics that destroy, maim, and possibly kill.

David Brower, another onetime Sierra Club executive director and later chairman of Friends of the Earth, gave office space to Earth First!, explaining: "I think the environmental movement has room for lots of different views broadcasting on many channels. I'm certainly not going to be against civil disobedience."

In fact, he added, "Earth First! makes Friends of the Earth look reasonable. What we need now is an outfit to make Earth First! look reasonable." ALF and ELF do that.

The vegan campaign coordinator for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Bruce Friedrich, told a Virginia animal-rights convention: "It would be a great thing if, you know, all of these fast-food outlets and these slaughterhouses and these laboratories and these banks that fund them exploded tomorrow." He added: "I think it's perfectly appropriate for people to take bricks and toss them through the windows."

In fact, Friedrich's enthusiasm for violence seems unbounded. At the Animal Rights 2001 conference, he opined: "If we really believe that animals have the same right to be free from pain and suffering at our hands, then, of course we're going to be blowing things up and smashing windows."

Rick Berman of the Center for Consumer Freedom points to financial ties between PETA and ALF/ELF. The former made a direct contribution to ELF in 2000 and has underwritten the activities of ALF/ELF activists since 1995, including the defense of Rodney Coronado, who was convicted of arson in 1992.

Existing law covers traditional crimes but has done little to hinder the organizations fomenting and organizing these activities. The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), which works with state legislators, observes that,

> by making no legal distinction between the common thug who vandalizes a public park and an organized ecoterrorist, the state is left void of investigatory and adjudicatory tools, as well as minimal sentencing for crimes. This, in sum, allows for a significant circular turnover rate, where criminals return to their organizations to commit further crimes in other locations or jurisdictions.

ALEC has proposed the model Animal and Ecological Terrorism Act (AETA) and Environmental Corrupt Organizations-Preventative Legislation and Neutralization Act (ECO-PLAN). Both are tailored to confront ecoterrorism and, unlike the old RICO legislation or recent USA PATRIOT Acts—which have posed potent threats to civil liberties—are not designed for broader use against ever-more-expansive targets.

In general, AETA would prohibit acts of or support for environmental terrorism, set penalties for violators, and allow victims to sue for treble damages. ECO-PLAN would target organizations that promote ecoterrorism and allow forfeiture of property used in such offenses.

The United States and other industrialized states demonstrate that a higher standard of living makes it easier to protect the environment; in fact, economic growth and technological progress can be great friends of the environment. Nevertheless, some trade-off between ecological and economic values is inevitable. And, in a democratic society, such disagreements are fought with words, not guns.

An extremist few have decided to use violence to get their way. Terrorism by them is no more justified than terrorism by Al Qaeda. Government at both the state and national levels must respond no less resolutely to protect American lives and property.

*Doug Bandow is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute.*


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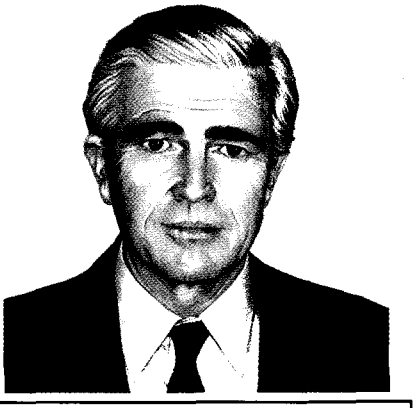
*by George McCartney*

# Shooting One Another in the Land of the Free



***Gods and Generals***

*Produced and directed by*
*Ronald F. Maxwell*
*Screenplay adapted from Jeff Shaara's novel by Ronald F. Maxwell*
*Released by Warner Bros.*

Opening in 2003, director Ron Maxwell's Civil War film, *Gods and Generals*, was swept from the multiplexes within two weeks by a torrent of critical hysteria. "Jingoistic goat spoor," raged one reviewer; "boring and bloated," sputtered another. Gentler commentators sighed it was "numbing," "an unqualified disaster." It was John Anderson in New York's *Newsday*, however, who best revealed what lay behind all this clamor. He found the film to be a "shameless apologia for the Confederacy as a divinely inspired crusade for faith, home, and slave labor."

This nearly universal condemnation revealed that Maxwell had broken a taboo. In adapting to the screen Jeff Shaara's carefully researched novel of the same title, he had dramatized the Confederate point of view as well as the Union's. Although he presents both sides as deeply flawed, this wasn't enough for America's mainstream press for he also suggested the South's cause was not without justice. Anderson was partially correct. The Confederacy was fighting for faith, home rule, and states' rights. It was not, however, principally defending slavery, nor was the North principally fighting against it. Maxwell makes it abundantly clear that many Confederate leaders, including Robert E. Lee and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, were either actively against slavery or were convinced its practice was withering away. These facts went unmentioned in 90 percent of the reviews probably because they violate current sensibilities so intolerably.

So *Gods and Generals* disappeared from the theaters. But then something unexpected happened. The film was released on DVD and rental outlets found it difficult to stock enough copies to keep up with the demand. It seems the public eventually decided to ignore their cultural guardians. But why hadn't this happened earlier when the film was still in its theatrical release?

By way of answer, the first thing to be said is that the film is not for the faint-hearted. At more than three-and-a-half hours, its examination of the first two years of the Civil War demands a fair amount of historical knowledge and a considerable measure of patience, attributes usually thought to be in short supply among American moviegoers, trained as they are to value sensation over sense. Add to this the complexity of a film that refuses to idealize any of its principals, lease of all its central figure, Jackson, powerfully portrayed by Stephen Lang as a courageous but often misguided leader whose fierce convictions lead him to prosecute the war with inflexible cruelty. This leaves the viewer in the unaccustomed position of having no one to cheer for unreservedly. Yet, despite these entertainment gaffes, Maxwell's film did finally find its audience. Why? My theory is that Americans can appreciate unconventional material and unpopular opinions, but they prefer to administer the medicine to themselves in small doses. Armed with their DVD remote controllers, they were free to watch the film at home at their own pace and in as many digestible portions as they chose.

Clyde Wilson wrote about *Gods and Generals*' historical consciousness in our February 2003 issue ("Reclaiming the American Story," *Vital Signs*). I will only add my impressions of the work's achievement as a film here.

Maxwell took on two challenges in telling his sprawling story. First, he had to organize a massive amount of detail. Second, as he tells us himself, he wanted to pose questions rather than resolve issues. This meant leaving unanswered his narrative's biggest question: Was war a justifiable response to the conflict between the South and the North? Not answering it definitively risked leaving the general audience uncomfortable. Maxwell solved this problem by giving his film design, clarity, and force despite its lack of resolution.

For his organizing principle, Maxwell chose a variety of pairings to achieve dramatic parallels and contrasts. Covering Jackson's campaigns from Manassas to Chancellorsville, the film conveys the Civil War largely from the Confederate perspective. Yet, at the same time, it amply represents the North's through the experiences of Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain (Jeff Daniels), a professor of rhetoric and literature at Bowdoin College who led the 20th Maine Division into battle. These two warriors are connected by having been on opposing sides at the battle of Fredericksburg, but Maxwell has taken pains to link them in another way, also. He introduces both men in their roles as educators—Jackson at the Virginia Military Institute; Chamberlain, Bowdoin. Their classrooms provide a shorthand index of the difference between the two men and, thereby, the

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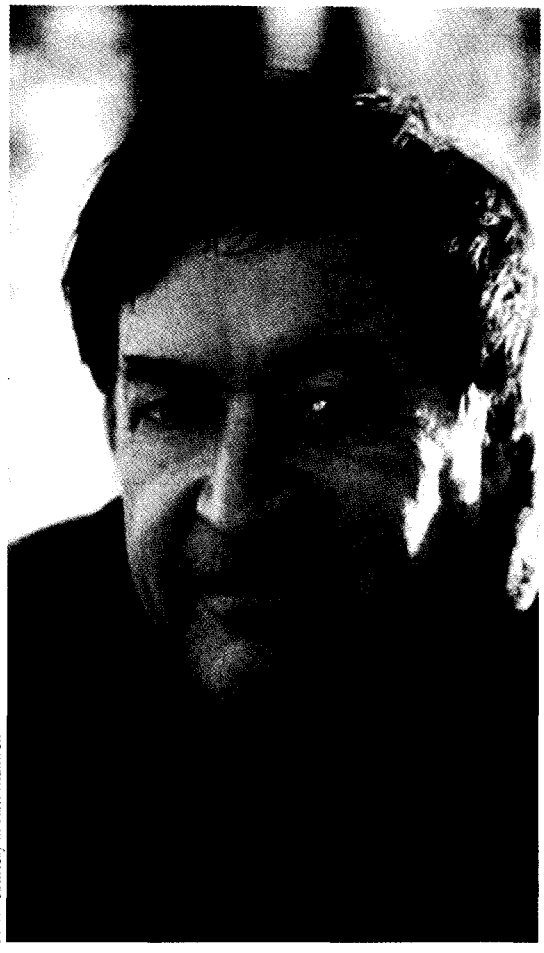

Photo courtesy of Ron Maxwell

*Ronald F. Maxwell, director and producer of* **Gods and Generals.**

South and the North. We first meet Jackson chastising his students for not having mastered his lesson in artillery. "I will have to teach you again, word for word," he informs his class with some asperity. No one dares question his intention. The tone of Chamberlain's class is quite different. He has loftier matters on his mind. He seeks to enlighten his students concerning the laws of nature that govern the universe, including human freedom. "Without law, there can be no freedom," he informs his pupils. While Jackson trains his charges in the practical arts of war, Chamberlain invites his students to participate in a disinterested contemplation of universal laws. This contrast suggests what was at the heart of the North-South impasse. The Southern mind strives inductively to accommodate itself to the world as it finds it; the Northern mind seeks deductively to impress abstract templates on immediate experience. An agrarian culture conforms to perceived realities; a manufacturing ethos forces its notions on the world.

This basic difference in outlook set the stage for the Civil War and its incredible waste of human life—620,000 dead and numberless maimed and wounded. And this raises Maxwell's question: Was this carnage justifiable? He refrains from answering for the very good reason that there can be no final response. What he does instead is provide as vividly as he can a range of answers from those involved, from the leaders to the field soldiers. We are then left to assess matters for ourselves.

Here is my assessment. It only needed the instigation of small-minded men primarily concerned with preserving their power and wealth to catapult large-souled idealists on both sides into a conflict that still bedevils this country. Maxwell's film is a treatise on the mendacity and myopia that make war possible. Even as the narrative pays tribute to the courage and honor of such men as Jackson and Chamberlain, it never lets us forget that their heroism came at the expense of wanton slaughter. To make this point, Maxwell echoes the original pairing of Jackson and Chamberlain throughout the film. At Fredericksburg, two Irish brigades—one Union, the other Confederate—battle each other. The Confederate side has the high ground and the benefit of a stone barricade. Thus protected, they readily massacre the Union soldiers while taking relatively few casualties themselves. Afterward, a Confederate officer remarks on the incredible bravery of the Union Irishmen who marched so hopelessly into the unequal battle: "Those fellows deserved a better fate." With these words, we recall an earlier remark made by Kilrain, an Irish sergeant, played sardonically by the always excellent Kevin Conway. He had pointed out to Chamberlain that many of his Irish friends were on the other side, adding, "We left tyranny at home to end up shooting at one another in the land of the free." Conway tosses off this irony as if to say, *What else can you expect in a world gone this mad?*

We find similar counterpointing in a Christmas Day cease-fire scene when a Confederate captain and a Union private greet each other cheerfully across the Rappahannock River and then wade to its middle to swap tobacco and coffee. The clash of opposites ultimately resides in the figure of Jackson himself, however. He is a fierce, unsparing warrior driven by honor and patriotism to give the enemy "the black flag," as he puts it. *Kill them all* is his constant counsel. Yet he is the same man who reverently joins his black cook in prayer, assuring him that his people will soon be free. He can with equanimity send boyish deserters to the firing squad and then openly weep for a five-year-old girl he barely knows when she dies from scarlet fever. You can admire Jackson for his personal bravery, but his mercy seems unwarrantably selective. Maxwell correctly foregrounds Jackson's Presbyterian faith in predestination, for this was an especially dangerous creed. It permitted all manner of cruelty in the name of the Almighty's foreordained will. The wisest generals have always made room for mercy whenever doing so posed no risk to their cause. They have recognized that mercy has both a virtuous and practical role to play in war. Showing concern for your enemy is not only a good in itself but also eminently sensible. Needless brutality in victory only breeds its like in the defeated.

It is an historical fact that Jackson received the wound that would ultimately kill him from Confederate soldiers who mistook him for a Union officer, and so the episode belongs in the film. But Maxwell does more than include it; he underlines it. Jackson was shot on the evening following his spectacular sneak attack on the Union troops at Chancellorsville. After routing them, he was determined, despite his subordinates' misgivings, to follow his black-flag policy, hunting down and killing as many of their fleeing ranks as possible even if it meant highly risky night fighting. Maxwell wants us to savor this last irony, to taste its ashen flavor fully. Jackson's valor was finally self-destructive. Just so we do not miss the point, in an earlier scene, we get something bitterly analogous as Chamberlain's troops listen to an officer who reads them a letter from President Lincoln. Maxwell has used the actual text in which Lincoln commends the men for their bravery in defeat and for having sustained "comparatively few casualties." Kilrain—who, by this time, has become the film's one-man chorus—snorts at Lincoln's presumption and, under his breath, asks with withering contempt, "Comparative to what? The Scots at Culloden, the French at Waterloo?" It is one of the film's best moments. This, Maxwell makes clear, is war: a bloody, insane business dressed up by distant leaders to look nobly patriotic.

Today, we continue to live with the Civil War's consequences as no doubt we will continue to endure the aftereffects of our current Middle Eastern adventures. *Dulce et decorum est*, indeed. c



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*by Chilton Williamson, Jr.*

# Reconquista de Villas

Héctor Villa was discovering the hard way that running afoul of the authorities in America is like riding a horse into quicksand, as Rodolfo Fierro, the Centaur's chief executioner, had had the misfortune to do: You escape from the fatal mire only by miracle (something God had not seen fit to vouchsafe poor Fierro).

For months after Héctor had wound up his yard sale, follow-up letters had continued to arrive almost weekly from the Belen municipal building—letters which, while stating very little in nearly incomprehensible English, appeared to threaten bankruptcy, sanctions, prison, and flogging in the public square. In desperation, he'd considered pulling up the red-white-and-blue mailbox by its post and renting an anonymous P.O. box downtown as a means to alleviate the sense of personal violation he suffered in receiving the harassing communications at his own home. He was on the verge of actually doing so when, late one evening in September, his telephone rang—and Héctor found himself facing a crisis compared to which the hovering city fathers of Belen appeared less like ravens than meadowlarks.

For ten or twenty seconds, he heard only a crackling buzz on the line, punctuated by the chink of coins being fed into a coin box. The sound was followed by cuss words in Spanish, just before the line went dead. Héctor hung up and was halfway across the room when the telephone rang again. Swearing himself, he retraced his steps and snatched the receiver from the wall.

"*¡Diga!*"

"*¡Oiga!* It is your *primo*, Eufemio Villa in Namiquipa, speaking! From a pay phone in Candelario's Cantina! How goes it in El Norte, *compadrito*?"

Eufemio's words were almost drowned out by the sound track of a Spanish-language romance AveMaría and Contracepción were watching in the TV room next door. The flash of resentment Héctor felt at that moment had nothing to do with the uproar, however. He had sent generous remittances by Western Union to his cousin over the past three months and was beginning to feel that enough was enough. Just the fact of residency in the U.S. of A. didn't make you a piggy-bank waiting to be sledgehammered by every lazy, unenterprising Mexican—kin or not—south of the border.

"It goes well enough," Héctor told him shortly. "Look, Eufemio, I sent you $100 by wire last month, and $150 two months before that. I'm not made of money because I have a computer business, do you understand? Who do you think I am—Bill Gates? I didn't invent the goddamn machines; I just work on them, that's all."

"Wait, *compadrito*, wait—you are not understanding! I do not ask you for money this time—only for a favor, a very small favor; that is all!"

Héctor, suspicious, said nothing. The last time someone had asked him for a favor, it had been to borrow his driver's license to present to the welfare office in Albuquerque, where the document had been temporarily confiscated, with great embarrassment to himself in getting it back after a lengthy and highly unpleasant bureaucratic procedure.

"Me and the family are coming north next month to try the U.S. for ourselves! I've paid the coyote the $3,000 he asked for already; he's going to bring us through near Columbus, where there aren't enough *migra* around these days to catch everybody. . . . Listen, *hombre*: I see by looking at the map Columbus is just a couple hundred kilometers south of Belen! From the photo you sent me of your beautiful home, only two Christmases ago, I know it is a large one, Héctor. There's only eight of us coming north—ten, if we bring two of my niece's sons as well—and so I feel certain, *primo*, you must have plenty room for—"

Héctor experienced something like panic, followed by the same violated feeling the city-hall letters had given him. Somehow, the spirit of *Mi casa es su casa* failed to carry across international boundaries. His house, simple as it was (though also tasteful, of course), was his castle, for which he had worked hard and sacrificed much. Now his good-for-nothing relatives back home in Namiquipa seemed determined to piggyback on his success by moving north—and, what was unimaginably worse, moving in!

"Eufemio, you don't know what you're saying! In the picture, perhaps, my house looked big to you. In reality, it is not so large! Consider, *hombre*, there are four of us, with—!" He'd been about to add, "with a fifth coming along," but held back this lie just in time. Naturally, Juana—Eufemio's wife—would know AveMaría had had her tubes tied immediately after the birth of George Dubya two years before.

"Listen, *compadrito*, you mustn't worry about a thing! We can sleep out on the lawn or on the roof until the weather turns cold, and after that—we'll see, we'll see! Anyway, the company's trying to cut us off, and I'm out of pesos to feed the phone with. . . . I'll call again in three or four weeks, just to let you know we're safely across the border and headed north to Belen! A million kisses to Contracepción—and AveMaría too, of course. *¡Adios, primo!*"

As Héctor had expected, the womenfolk responded badly to the news when he broke it to them. AveMaría protested there was no place in her home for a lazy toad like Juana Villa, while Contracepción wailed that she'd never be able to enjoy a wink's sleep at night under the same roof as Máximo—at sixteen, Eufemio's oldest son—whom she accused of having tried to seduce her while she was on a visit to Namiquipa the previous summer. Since the electronic wand wasn't working after Dubya dropped it into the toilet bowl the day before, and neither mother nor daughter seemed willing to get up from the sofa to turn down the volume by hand, their uproar, added to the din of the TV movie in which the lovers were being serenaded by a mariachi band outside of the Big Cat House at the Mexico City Zoo, was finally more than Héctor could stand. Clutching at his graying, but still thick, hair, he fled to the kitchen, where, seizing the tequi-



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la bottle in one hand and the telephone in the other, he settled down behind the kitchen table to seek consolation from his friend, Jesús "Eddie" Juárez, upriver a few miles in Los Lunas.

For the next few weeks, Héctor tried to put the Eufemio Villas out of his mind, partly in the hope that, like a bad dream, they would vanish at the first penetrating ray of reality, and partly from guilt, since, when he *did* think of them, he found himself imagining the entire family had been apprehended by the *migra* this side of the border and been deported back to Namiquipa in the nick of time. Mostly, he existed in a state of grim dread, like a man expecting a fatal medical diagnosis, as he awaited a phone call from the south. The call would surely come collect, he thought, with scornful resentment; Eufemio, excepting only the few months after Juana received a small legacy from a rich uncle, had never had so much as a peso to his name.

On a bright hot September in late afternoon, Héctor was in his garden, weeding the chrysanthemum bed and wondering, as he worked, whether city hall would tolerate his placing the antique sod-busting plow he'd admired at a local flea market in the southwest corner of the lawn where it wouldn't show too much from the street, when a white school bus with the words SOUTHSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TUCSON painted in blue along the side of it slowed and rolled to a stop beside the mailbox. From his knees, Héctor glanced up briefly at the bus, then returned his attention to the chrysanthemums. His mind noted, vaguely, that, for a church bus, this one was awfully noisy: people screaming and shouting through the raised windows. "Hey, *compadrito*!" The voice, bellowing out above the general confusion, sounded horribly familiar. "We made it, *hombre*! Here we are, safe and sound, all of us—the Villas, at last, have arrived in El Norte!"

Héctor took a careful count as Eufemio's family piled off the bus; they made thirteen or fourteen, he couldn't be certain which. Everyone wore a daypack on his back and clutched several bulging Wal-Mart bags. His heart sank as his cousin—a large, fat man with drooping mustaches, wearing a dirty white T-shirt and a baseball cap—waddled toward him, followed heavily by Juana who, though at least a foot shorter than her husband, appeared to be twice his girth. The Eufemio Villas, so far as Héctor knew, were still Catholic; the distasteful thought occurred to him that she could be pregnant yet again. Unnerved, Héctor turned his back on them and shouted toward his house, as though for help.

"AveMaría! Contracepción! The villist—that is, the Villas are here!"

The family stood grouped alongside the bus, watching impatiently while the driver—a pale, weak-chested, bespectacled young man—struggled to carry a dozen or more cardboard boxes tied with string down the steps and drop them in exhaustion on the sidewalk. They'd actually been apprehended at the border (Eufemio explained to Héctor as they stood together watching the young man at work) after their coyote abandoned them and fled into the desert, loaded like animals into a van with barred windows, and driven to a detention center in Deming, where they were held overnight without tortillas or even TV. The next day, they were visited by a gringo attorney who advised them, as descendents of the "social bandit" and revolutionary Pancho Villa, to request political asylum on the ground of persecution by the PAN government in Mexico City. With the attorney's help, Eufemio had filled out the required paperwork, and, the day after that, the church bus arrived, chauffeured by the young man who'd offered to take them north to Belen for no money. When Héctor suggested that he might be willing to drive them as far as Chicago, or maybe just Albuquerque, Eufemio said no, that wouldn't be necessary; Belen was a good town, full of opportunity, and, anyway, the Villas needed to stay together if they hoped to survive in a racist country.

After the bus drove off, AveMaría announced that, if she was really expected to feed all these people, she would need to do a big shopping at the Albertson's store in Los Lunas. She left in her new Subaru, taking Contracepción along, while Juana went into the bedroom to lie down in the big double bed with its Shape-U-Up mattress and Héctor and Eufemio seated themselves at the kitchen table.

"I was bringing you a bottle of José Cuervo from Namiquipa," Eufemio explained, "but the *migra* stole it from my hands at the border—*bastardos*!"

"It's OK," Héctor said helplessly, "I got plenty of tequila in the house already." A hard winter lay ahead of them, he could see; he'd better try to get used to this.

After the first drink, Héctor felt slightly better; after the third or fourth, he was barely aware of the din around him as a dozen young children and *pendejos* surged back and forth through the house with a confused roaring sound, like a dirty tidal wave. The two men were still drinking when AveMaría and Contracepción returned from the supermarket and carried in the groceries they'd bought—bags and bags worth, so that they had to make three or four trips in from the car, and costing, Héctor guessed, three or four hundred dollars. And tomorrow, he'd have to go to the liquor store and stock up, big time.

AveMaría, with help from Contracep, prepared an enormous pot of menudo and a platter of hot dogs wrapped in fried tortillas. When the meal was ready, Juana came from the bedroom to join them, and the adults—Contracepción and Máximo included—sat down around the table in the kitchen, after AveMaría had served the kids on paper plates and shooed them out into the yard to eat. Partly to be hospitable, and also for survival's sake, Héctor produced a gallon bottle of Gallo wine and six tall water glasses. By now, he hardly knew what was happening to him, or cared; after all, he reflected stupidly, *mañana* is another day.

Later, when Juana had retired to the bedroom again and AveMaría and Contracep were washing up, Héctor and Eufemio, carrying the wine bottle along with them, wandered out into the yard to watch the sun set behind Ladrón Peak, which, from their perspective, appeared like an eruptive volcano against the western sky. Around them on the grass, the Eufemio clan—plus a few others of whose identities Héctor remained ignorant—were spreading their blankets, whacking each other with pillows, and tuning their transistor radios for the night. Off in the southwest corner of the fence, where Héctor had in mind to place the sod-buster plow, Contracepción and Máximo stood embracing in a manner that caused her father to avert his eyes. In just a few hours, his home had assumed the aspect of a *barrio* in Chiapas. What, Héctor agonized, would the neighbors have to say about this small corner of the Third World set down overnight in their pleasant and comfortable neighborhood?

In the bad Old Mexico of Pancho Villa's day, when peons amounted to property, like so many yard ornaments, a convenient solution to his problem might have existed. In the circumstances, there was only prayer to trust to—prayer, and the worthy honorables at the Belen city hall. C



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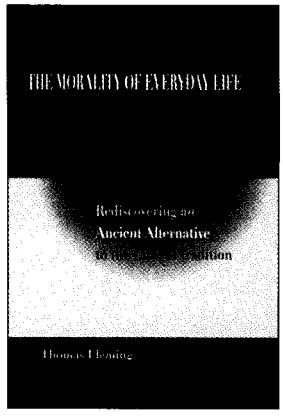


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